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Heart and Soul



A Novel

By

Henrietta Dana Skinner

Author of "Espiritu Santo"

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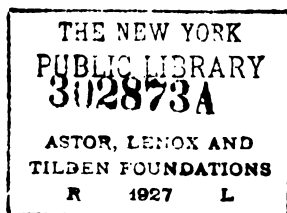
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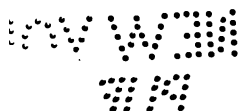
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TO
MY HUSBAND
HENRY WHIPPLE SKINNER
AND
MY SON
RICHARD DANA SKINNER

MERCANTILE LIBRARY,
NEW YORK.

HEART AND SOUL

CHAPTER I

THE opening of this twentieth century finds me with but one more decade of the allotted span of life. I have finished my sixtieth year, and I know not if another shall be added to the tale. I know not how I stand before God or man—whether I am most saint or sinner, whether I am most hero or coward, whether my neighbor holds me in reverence or in secret contempt, whether the wife of my bosom has found her idol of gold, or of clay that is already shattered. I know not even whether I have the approval or the condemnation of my own conscience. I only know that God is, that I myself am, that death will be, and then—God have mercy on my soul!

But life is full and real, the instinct of self-preservation is strong. Until the day of death comes, I live, and I love life. Surely, if God gives me life, I do not wrong to love it. But I have not lived my life alone. Its thread is woven with the web of the lives of others. Will these others be witnesses for or against me at the latter day, and who are they?

As the years pass in review through my remembrance I come to the opening tragedy. Very vague, very indistinct, is my childish recollection of our

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cafetal in Cuba, until we reach the bloody day that deluged my infant soul in horror never to be effaced. I seem to see my young mother floating in some dreamy haze, a vision of spreading muslin skirts, a soft cheek against mine, caressing hands and tender kisses. I hear faintly her silvery laugh and my father's voice saying, fondly, "You are as much a baby as he!" I seem to see wide verandas, long vistas of stately avenues and groves of royal palms and mournful cocoa-trees, of shady plantain and stiff, decorous orange, and underneath the clinging flowery vines of the coffee-berry. Everywhere negro slaves are seen—a swarm of black faces. Friendly and kind these faces appear at first, but that view is quickly obscured. I best remember my father on horseback, in white linen suit and straw hat, cigar in mouth. I can yet feel his strong hands, as he lifts me up in the air and tosses me high above his head. Then comes the dreadful day that obliterates every other memory. My father dashes up the veranda steps, pale, hatless, catches me up from the floor, and thrusts me into the arms of a mulatto attendant, crying, "Save him if you can; I must protect his mother!" I only know that we crouched in hiding, the mulatto's hand tight over my mouth to keep me from screaming aloud in my terror, and his voice hissing into my ear, "Hush! hush! or they will kill us too!" Nearer and nearer came horrible cries, the roar of enraged human brutes. Black faces, distorted by every worst passion, surged around us; cruel, bloody hands killed and destroyed. My father stood before my mother's door, a pistol in one hand, a sabre in the other. I see him still, ghastly, with streaming wounds and dilated eyes, his clothes torn from his body, till overborne and foully murdered. I see one burly negro holding aloft my infant sister's

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white form on the end of his machete ; I hear terrible, heartrending screams in a woman's voice. It comes from my mother's room, but I cannot recognize the tone, and my baby eyes were spared the sight of her end. Oh, those hideous black faces, jeering now, till they catch sight of two armed figures—my grandfather, still in the prime of life, and his overseer. Then come a mighty roar, a rush, groans and curses—the two figures fall even as my father fell, and the maniac crew, with a yell of triumph, presses on and on till beyond my sight, and we are left cowering in our hiding-place, sick with horror and fear.

Of what happened after this I recollect nothing till I found myself transplanted to my new home in the Northwest. Many years later, when hunting the shelves of a library for information about my native isle, I learned of an insurrection of slaves in a portion of Cuba during the year 1844. A full account was given in gruesome detail of the massacre at the Selva Alegre plantation, in which perished Augustin Frémont, Esq., formerly of South Carolina, his wife and baby, his aged father and his overseer. Only one member of the family survived, it stated—an infant boy, hidden for days by a faithful attendant. This massacre was recorded as an instance of special ingratitude and bloodthirstiness on the part of the misguided blacks, the Frémont plantation having been noted for the kind treatment of its slaves and the benevolent, paternal character of its administration.

It was well for my development into healthy boyhood that I was removed far from the scenes of my infancy and its melancholy associations to a totally dissimilar climate and surroundings. My grandfather Frémont was a Carolina Huguenot, who, having married a West-Indian heiress, had settled

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on her property in Cuba. His eldest son returned to Carolina, but the youngest son, my father, was educated in France and Spain, and was wholly a Cuban in all his interests. The daughter of the house was sent, for the purpose of learning English, to the Visitation Convent at Georgetown, where she formed an ardent friendship with pretty Félice de Macarty, the granddaughter of the Marquis de Macarty, a French-Irish refugee at the court of Louis XVI., who had come to America with Lafayette and De Kalb during the Revolutionary struggle. A son of the old Franco-Hibernian nobleman had thought well to follow in his father's footsteps in the days when the French Revolution made it too hot for aristocrats in Paris, and, attracted by its French history and atmosphere to that part of the newly annexed Northwest Territory which lay on the banks of the Detroit, had settled there, fought under General St. Clair in the War of 1812, and identified himself with the French element of Detroit by marrying the daughter of one of its prosperous land-owners and gentlemen farmers, old Félix Belancour de Saint Pierre, *dit* Grandchamp. With pretty Félice de Belancour Macarty, the daughter of this emigrant noble, young Augustin Frémont straightway fell in love, and brought her as his bride to his West-Indian home. After the massacre, my mother's father sailed for the island of Cuba to try and recover the bodies of his murdered relatives. A trembling, half-starved mulatto came forward with a living white child in his arms, unexpectedly rescued from the general slaughter, and my grandfather hurried me away to his northern home at Hamtramck, on the outskirts of Detroit.

He must have tried to keep from me everything that I could associate with the scenes of my baby-

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hood. No books, no pictures of tropical life were in the house; no portrait of my mother adorned its walls. Had it not been for the terrors that haunted me in my dreams, and in the hours between waking and sleeping, I should have had no suspicion of any life but that of the Northwest. It was not till I was about twelve years of age that I again saw the countenance of a negro. Indians I was familiar with, for most of the labor on our farms and gardens was done by Indians and half-breeds from the neighboring hamlets of l'Anse Creuse and Grosse Pointe. Indian fishermen and trappers had first taught me to handle boat and gun and rod, and their dark faces roused no repulsion in my bosom. But the negro type was fatally associated with the nightmare horrors of my childhood. There was much visiting in those days between Detroiters and their Canadian neighbors across the river. Only the width of the noble strait lay between us and the possessions of Her Britannic Majesty, and socially the towns of Detroit, Windsor, and Sandwich were almost as one. Amherstburg, at the mouth of the river, though farther removed, was the principal Canadian port of entry for the large steamboats that plied Lake Erie from Ohio and New York ports, and was also, though less closely, connected with Detroit life. It was while at the latter place one day that I heard mysterious whisperings about "fugitives," "the Underground Railroad," "Ohio bloodhounds," and other strange expressions, and soon after, going down to the wharf with my friends, I saw a number of men landing from the Sandusky steamer, and in their midst the face of a negro. A horrible feeling of loathing came over me, of physical repulsion and a deathly sickness. I nearly fainted under the stress of emotion and ghastly recollection,

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and for many sleepless nights I was held in its grasp of terror until I was the very shadow of myself. It seems strange to me, at this distance of time, that I confided in no one, asked no questions ; but I believe this strange silence about nocturnal fears is a phenomenon of childhood. I began, however, secretly to haunt libraries and to search in cyclopædias and geographies for information about the negro race, and there I came across the detailed account of the massacre at the Frémont plantation, every word of which vividly recalled the scenes of terror that haunted my memory. It was almost a relief to know for a certainty that these hideous visions of the night were no supernatural obsession, but merely the involuntary recalling of a forgotten horror. An intense hatred of the colored race, a burning desire for revenge, took complete possession of my boyish soul. As soon as I was grown I would go to Cuba, I would re-establish my father's ruined plantation, I would hunt up the murderers of my parents and have them tortured with every fiendish contrivance that ingenious cruelty could devise, and thus repay upon a hated race the mental sufferings of years!

CHAPTER II

THE Detroit of my childhood was a well-wooded, straggling city of between thirty and forty thousand inhabitants, a sort of magnified village, prosperous, conservative, and with much rural beauty. The French blood of the early settlers (who under de la Mothe-Cadillac, Dubuisson, and especially Céloron de Bienville, had converted the military post and trading-station at Fort Pontchartrain into a flourishing French colony, the largest settled community of the Northwest) had intermingled more or less with that of the later Scotch-Canadian emigrants who had established themselves there during the British occupation of the colony from 1762 to 1796. After its cession to the United States, at this latter date, came the great movement of New England pioneers to the Northwest, and in time this new strain allied itself to the older French and Scotch elements, and the town grew slowly and surely with the growth of the Northwest and the commerce of the Great Lakes. At the time of which I write the era of manufactures had not commenced, the great influx of immigration that was to come with the opening up of the lumber trade in northern Michigan and the mining industry in the Upper Peninsula had not yet begun. We were still chiefly an agricultural and trading community and garrison town. If the New England and Scotch-Canadian element predominated in the commercial

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sphere, it was the French spirit that still held sway in the social world and was a strong influence in public life. Men of French names, or at least of French descent, held the highest positions in the civic life of the city ; a French priest, Père Gabriel Richard, had been the first representative of the new state in the national Congress ; French was still spoken exclusively by many of the older generation and heard at every turning in streets and market-places. We listened to French sermons every Sunday in old, historic St. Anne's Church as had our fathers before us for a hundred and fifty years, while the vivacity, hospitality, and easy sociability of the French spirit was the gracious inheritance of Detroit social life, though this spirit was perhaps somewhat aggressive in its nationality, holding itself to represent the aristocracy of the town, regarding with suspicion the newer elements fast coming to the front, and measuring all others by their share or lack of the possession of French antecedents. The alliance of Scotch and English with the French stock was curiously represented by the intermixture of family names. French baptismal names—the Julie, Archange, Félice, Victoire, Fifine, Fanchette of the girls, or Pierre, François, Antoine, or Gaspard of the boys—being united to sturdy Scotch or broad English patronymics, while the Johns, Williams, and Franks, the Janes, Marians, and Sarahs, were annexed to genuine French surnames.

The French farms, with their orchards and gardens and stately shade trees, ran back from the river's edge in strips of greater or less width for a distance of three miles through woods and meadows to the unbroken forest, which had formerly stretched to the water, but had been gradually cleared by the industry of the early pioneers. My grandfather's farm lay

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about two miles to the east of the city in the village of Hamtramck, on the Côte du Nord, as the northern shore of the river lying between Detroit and Lake Sainte-Claire was called. The house was a simple, rambling frame structure, standing under the shade of fine elm and maple trees at the head of a lawn which was intersected by the turnpike road to the hamlet of Grosse Pointe on Lake Sainte-Claire. Across the road lay the orchard, stretching to the narrow strip of sand washed by the northern arm of the Detroit River, at that point divided into two wide-flowing streams by the regal, forest-crowned Belle Isle, Queen of the Detroit, surveying from her river throne the commerce of the Great Lakes as its fleets pass by her portals, doing her homage. From the upper windows of the house we could see, across six miles of level farm lands lying to the east, the opal waters of Lake Sainte-Claire, so baptized, on the feast of the virgin Clara of Assisi, by the gallant La Salle on his adventurous voyage in the *Griffin* through the waters of the Great Lakes in 1679. Behind the house, for half a mile back towards the forest, lay our kitchen-garden and corn-fields, tilled by Indian half-breeds, and the stables, dairy, and hen-house, in charge of a young French farmer and his thrifty wife. A little too thrifty I sometimes suspected the young woman to be, for it was marvellous how the couple were able to put by money to buy patches of land here and there, to build cottages which they let out to working-men's families at goodly rents, and finally to become large dealers in real estate, while my grandfather, with all his economies, was barely able to make his expenses out of the farm.

My education was neither wide nor deep, but it has served me. In the summer it was carried on chiefly at the boat-house at the foot of the orchard,

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where I studied under the instruction of Indian fishermen and French hunters and trappers the fine arts of swimming, diving, boating, and fishing. In the marshes of Belle Isle I learned to fish for muskalonge and bass and whitefish; at the Sainte-Claire Flats, across the lake, and in the forests of Grosse Île I learned to handle a gun, to distinguish the notes of the birds, and to know the varieties of trees and wild flowers; from our young farmer I learned the vagaries of hens and pigs and cattle, the management of horses, the care of fruits, flowers, and grains; from the old French women in the neighboring farm cottages I learned the wonderful legends of the "Nain Rouge," the "Loup Garou," and other choice bits from their repertory of folk-lore, as well as the *chansons de voyageurs* and folk-songs of the *habitans*, and heard recitals of the adventures of fur-traders and *coureurs de bois*, of military commandants and Jesuit missionaries. Other tales of local history I gathered from the Indians and half-breeds. Twice a week I galloped into Detroit on my rough Canadian pony and was instructed in Latin, sacred history, and catechism by one of the Belgian priests at St. Anne's. The cold winters brought other accomplishments; snow-shoeing, skating, and ice-boating I soon became proficient in; and in stormy weather, or during the long winter evenings, my grandfather taught me to fence and box, to play billiards and chess. Well and carefully did he drill me in my French, fearful lest I should acquire the Canadian patois. Together we read the French classics, and I was obliged to copy at length what were considered in his youth models of elegant letter-writing, and to memorize and declaim masterpieces of prose and verse with the proper Parisian modulations of his day. I taught myself geography from a large globe,

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and history from Mavor's *Histories and Voyages*, in old-fashioned duodecimos, and from Scott's and Cooper's novels, which I borrowed from our neighbor, Dr. Chabert, for my grandfather admitted nothing to his shelves in the way of fiction save Miss Edgeworth's Irish stories and the novels of Lever and Gerald Griffin.

In other matters besides French my grandfather was a severe drill-master. He had been educated in his boyhood for the engineer corps in a French military school, and was proud of his knowledge of geometry and mechanics and of his skill in draughtsmanship. To his joy my tastes conformed to his; perspective drawing became my passion. I was quick at mathematics and physics, and the favorite occupation of my idle hours was to construct on paper magnificent bridges and docks and marvellous aqueducts and roads and fortifications. Railroads, too, were my delight, and my table was littered with sketches and plans of the structures that were to benefit mankind and incidentally to win me undying fame.

There was no female influence in my home life. I had dreams of a mother's kiss, and when the world went wrong with me I would shut myself up and sob for my mother and my baby sister. But the mothers and sisters of my boy friends were somehow different from the woman of my dreams, and it seemed to me sacrilegious to suppose that my mother could ever have scolded me and made me fetch or carry for her as did the mother of William Laubépine, nor could the little sister of my dreams have called me a torment and hoped the day would soon come for me to go to boarding-school, as did the sisters of François and Émile McNiff. Yet the love of one woman influenced not only my boyhood, but left its impression upon my whole life.

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I was about ten years of age the blissful summer when Alexandrine Chabert came across my path as an angel from heaven. She was a year and a half older than I, but at that age we did not feel the difference. We read Cooper's tales together; we sat upon the beach hand-in-hand and repeated the legends of the *habitans*, or talked over the future, when we should live in a splendid château in France with our thirteen children. Our first quarrel arose over the name of the youngest, which I desired should be Arabella, while Alix expressed a preference for the name of Hildegarde. We did not speak to each other for a fortnight after this disagreement of tastes, and much of the angelic illusion was dispelled. But before long I worshipped her as madly as ever, though I was destined to suffer much from this attachment, for Alix was now beginning to mark the difference in our ages and to show a decided preference for boys of more advanced years. I felt this keenly, but I knew my advantages and was determined to win glory in her eyes. In some athletic contests between the Hamtramck and Windsor lads I came off victorious both in the running and swimming matches. We had laid out all our pocket-money on the prizes, and that which fell to me was a gilt affair which we considered the acme of art. My first thought was to display it to Alexandrine. She was walking with Montgomerie Moir, a youth for whom I had a hearty detestation forever after, for he was witness of her indifferent glance and heard her contemptuous exclamation,

"What a tawdry thing!"

The spell was broken. I said nothing, but wandered disconsolately homeward with my poor, despised reward, and, stealing down to the boat-house pier, dropped my hard-won but now valueless prize

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into the placidly flowing, heaven-blue waters of the Detroit. It was not till many days after that my grandfather learned, through little Stéphanie Chabert (Étienne, as she was called in the local French diminutive), Alix's baby sister and his especial pet, that I had won the coveted decoration.

"Well, Rodéric, my boy, why haven't you shown me the famous prize?" he asked. "Étienne tells me that you won it. Do you think the old man has lost his interest in your young sports just because he has the rheumatism and cannot compete with you?"

"I can't show it to you, Pépé," I stammered; "I chucked it into the river, 'cause—'cause Alix Chabert didn't like it."

My grandfather threw himself back in his chair, roaring with laughter, and I rushed out of the room bursting with anger and mortification. Never again would I tell him the secrets of my soul, if I had to seal them with my heart's blood!

But Alix was kindly in the main, and my attachment endured. I was useful to her in many ways, for I was proud to do her services which her brothers scorned. Her father trusted me implicitly in the management of a boat, and in view of my youth thought it quite proper, when Alix was sixteen, that I should sail her down the river to the hops at Fort Wayne or to the archery-parties and lawn-teas at Windsor and Sandwich. There was much visiting in those days between Detroit and the garrison at Fort Wayne, four miles below the city. The young officers were in great demand at Detroit entertainments, and the young ladies of Detroit and Hamtramck were eagerly sought after at the military balls and festivities at the post. As a result our pretty Alix's sixteenth summer was a gay one, and

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I and my small batwing boat, *l'Invincible Malbrouck*, were held high in her gracious favor.

We were returning one evening from an afternoon *fête* at Grosse Pointe, where some of the leading Detroit families had lately established summer residences, when the exquisite beauty of the evening tempted us to land on the eastern extremity of Belle Isle, where the waters of Lake Sainte-Claire narrow down into the Detroit, and pass through its deep, stately channel on their way to Lake Erie and beyond, in their long, ocean-bound march through half a continent. We drew up our boat on the soft strip of sand that girdles the island. The sun had gone down over the fair, distant city behind us, its last rays touching the fleecy clouds above with a rosy flush. The enormous disk of the full moon was glowing on the horizon's edge, just resting a moment on the pearly lake before beginning its upward heavenly course. The sunset breeze sighed softly through the branches of the stately pines at whose feet we were sitting. Save for that mournful sound, all was tranquil and calm, and I felt myself infinitely blessed as I gazed up into Alix's countenance. It seemed to me that her gray eyes had a new softness in them, that the pink color came and went more easily in her downy cheeks, her sweet face, in its frame of fluffy hair, dimpled more tenderly. A shy smile quivered on her lips as she hummed softly to herself the words of an old Canadian "*Chant du Voyageur*":

"Par derrier' chez ma tante	(Behind my aunt's cottage
Il y a un bois joli ;	There is a pretty grove
Le rossignol y chante	Where the nightingale sings
Et le jour et la nuit.	By night and by day.)

*"Gai, lon, la, gai le rosier,
Du joli mois de mai !*

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" Il chante pour ces dames	(Sings for the old maids
Qui n'ont pas de mari ;	Who have not a husband ;
Il ne chante pas pour moi,	But he does not sing for me,
Car j'en ai un joli !	For I have a fine one !)

*" Gai, lon, la, gai le rosier,
Du joli mois de mai !"*

I did not deceive myself. I knew well that I could never be more to Alix than her young school-boy brother, her childhood's playmate, but as I gazed up at her I vowed silently before Heaven that henceforth my life should be consecrated to her happiness without hope of reward. Oh, pretty Alix! pretty Alix! My affection for you seems now to me the most creditable of my life. Would that I had loved as unselfishly those that I was destined to win!

The sincerity of my vow was to be put to a test without delay. After a few moments of delicious silence, Alix turned to me with beaming eyes and blushing cheeks.

"Éric," she asked, "do you not see that the knight has come?"

I started up stupidly. "Night? Why, Alix, the evening has hardly begun. There are hours of twilight yet."

"Ah, you dull boy! Yet it seems to be too dark for you to see!"

Then her meaning dawned on me, and a great weakness and coldness came over me. My heart palpitated till a deathly feeling seized me. She did not notice my agitation, but began to chatter gayly of her happiness, of the young officer who was so strong and gallant, of how she adored army life, and how he was coming for her at Christmas to carry her off to an Eastern post, and how she would marry at seventeen, even as the grandmother for whom she had been named.

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As she chatted on, happily, foolishly, I had time to recollect myself. I knew that I must accept the inevitable, that I had always foreseen this. For her sake her young knight must be sacred to me, and she must never guess my love, which should henceforth be rigidly concealed. It was hard, at fifteen, to feel that life held no more hopes for me, but with a full heart I renewed the vow so lately spoken to devote myself to her happiness, cost what it might.

The rosy flush had died away from the sky, the lake was gray and dull, a level black cloud cut like a sword across the golden disk of the risen moon. The heavy dews chilled the evening air. Alix shivered a little and glanced about her. I pressed her hand and wished her joy with as cheerful an accent as I could summon, but a solemn silence fell between us, and at last she rose to go. I started slowly and sadly to push out the boat from the sand, when suddenly she gave a little gasping cry.

"The moon! Éric, Éric! look at the moon!" she whispered, hoarsely.

The sharp black cloud that cleft it, and which had looked like a sword, now spread and grew grayer, larger, fainter. It assumed a shape like that of a canoe, and moved northward, slowly at first, till it had passed clear across the face of the moon, then more swiftly, growing ever larger and more shadowy, and moving ever more rapidly northward.

"Do you not hear the dog barking?" screamed Alix, clutching my bared arm with her little icy hands. Her face was ghastly white and her teeth chattering. "Listen! it is the Phantom Huntsman's hound! Will he never stop? See, it is moving northward—northward! It is the Spectral Hunt! Oh, my God!"

She fell on her knees sobbing, and I felt the chills

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that the supernatural causes rushing up and down my spine and into the roots of my hair. My teeth began to chatter uncontrollably, and water pressed from my eyes. Who of us had not heard of the *Chasse Galère*, the Phantom Chase, the Ghostly Huntsman and his dog who haunt the lake, sailing ever northward through the air in their spectral canoe, manifesting themselves when death is near to us or to those we love?

I, too, went down on my knees, and we clasped each other like frightened children, and with staring eyes and shuddering frames watched the Shape as it travelled on, growing more and more gray and shadowy, yet ever more and more to our strained vision in the likeness of the Spectral Huntsman's boat, the figure of a dog outlined in the prow, a man's form crouching in the stern, while across lake and forest over the evening air was borne the baying of a hound, fainter and farther off, until it ceased, and the Shape vanished into mist over la Côte du Nord!

CHAPTER III

THE summer passed, autumn came and went, winter was with us. Pretty Alix could laugh now at her superstitious fears. Nothing untoward had yet happened, which seemed sufficient guarantee that nothing ever would happen. I had become fairly reconciled to my lonely fate, and was still looking forward for an occasion to prove my unalterable, unselfish devotion. I wished Alix, of course, to love her young knight and to be faithful to him, for it was part of her perfection that she should do so, but sometimes I dreamed that there might be a temporary misunderstanding between the lovers, and that I should be the happy instrument of their reconciliation, or I dreamed that his life was in danger and that I was the one to rescue him and bring him back in health and safety to her arms. All the reward I asked was that she should in some way owe her happiness to me, otherwise my self-abnegation was complete. I almost gloried in it.

I was in a very exalted frame of mind during the betrothal ceremony, and the continual frivolity of Alix's young brothers and sister grated on my highly wrought nerves.

"You vain, silly little thing!" I whispered, getting little ten-year-old Étienne behind the door and giving her a good shaking. "Have you no more consideration for your sister than to go hiding round corners like a grinning monkey and laughing at her

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at the most solemn moment of her whole life? Just let me teach you manners so that you'll never forget them!"

But sturdy little Étienne did not mind the shaking. She only made faces at me, pounding me, and, I am sorry to add, kicking me, and threatening to scream out if I did not let her go. In vain I hissed "Shut up!" She only said, tauntingly, in a loud stage whisper:

"'He who in quest of quiet "Silence" hoots,
Is apt to make the hubbub he imputes.'"

By this time matters were worse than when I interfered. The boys were giggling loudly, the guests were looking round to see whence the interruption came, and Alix's eyes glanced at me reproachfully. I let go of Étienne quickly, but the solemnity of the occasion was fatally disturbed. I could have hanged the child, but one of the older relatives pounced down upon her and she was dragged off, shaking her fist at me and shrieking, "I can't wish you were dead, Éric Frémont, for that would be a sin, but I wish you had never been born!" And I slunk out of the room, muttering to myself, vengefully,

"I'll take it out of you some day, you little devil!"

The first days of winter were ushered in by intense cold. The river was frozen over from shore to shore, and far out into both lakes. Although navigation had formally closed with the last days of autumn, yet many belated boats were ice-bound and their crews rescued with difficulty. It was at this time that my opportunity came to make a supreme sacrifice for Alix, but not in any such manner as I had dreamed of.

One evening my grandfather had gone into De-

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troit on business, and I was taking tea with the Chaberts, when a knock came at the door and the doctor was called out into the hall. For a few moments there were whispered consultations and a general air of mystery; then the doctor returned to the room, followed by Émile McNiff and two Duncan lads from Windsor.

"Éric Frémont, we want you to lend a hand with the ice-boat to-night."

"Thank you, but I don't go ice-boating at night in zero weather for fun," I remarked, stretching myself comfortably before the fire.

"Something's up, and we want your help," urged the boys.

"No! No fooling to-night," I replied, impatiently.

The boys hesitated, then Alix drew near, her big gray eyes wide with excitement and emotion.

"Éric, dear Éric," she whispered, "it is a case of life or death! You will not refuse to help us. Dear Éric, be good, do be good and help us!"

I looked up at the doctor for explanation.

"I must take you into our confidence, my boy," he said, looking me steadily in the eyes, "for I know that even if you refuse to help us you will not betray us. A small tug tried to cross over from Sandusky day before yesterday, thinking that the channel was still open. She is now beating about in the broken ice about six miles out in Lake Erie."

"I know; I heard about it in the city this afternoon," I replied, "but a relief party is to be sent out to-morrow at daybreak."

"Yes, in the morning, but"—sinking his voice to a mysterious whisper—"there is a passenger aboard that must be taken off to-night."

I understood him in a moment. The existence of the "Underground Railroad" in Ohio, and of its

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agents and abettors, not only in the Canadian ports, but also among those of strong antislavery sentiment on the American shore, was well known, and the landing of fugitive slaves at Amherstburg and Windsor, and even on the American islands in the river, was not infrequent. The law in operation throughout the Northwest compelling the return to their masters of fugitive slaves captured on free soil engaged the active sympathy for the runaways of many who otherwise were law-abiding citizens. Their secrets were closely kept, however, and I had never suspected these, our most intimate friends and neighbors, of any connection with such transactions. Doubtless the knowledge of all I had suffered at the hands of the African race, and my violent antipathy to negroes, had made them particularly careful to avoid the subject in my presence.

"I suppose you mean a nigger," I said, contemptuously.

Alix pressed closer to my side, then, kneeling down, she clasped her hands across my knees, and, looking up into my face appealingly, took up the story.

"It is a poor runaway slave, Éric," she said, "and the United States sheriffs are after him. He escaped through West Virginia and Ohio, and then found the boats to Canada had stopped running. A couple of men of the 'Underground Railroad' offered to take him across the lake in this tiny tug; they are within sight of freedom, but the ice has caught them and holds them helpless. The sheriffs at Detroit have been warned and are looking out for the boat, and you know what that means. It means that the law will send the poor slave back to his master to be treated more cruelly than ever, for he would not have run away from a kind master. The boys will try to get him off to-night, but it is too late

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to reach Bonsoleil or the Indian pilots, and no one else knows the river as you do. Dear, dear Éric, you will not refuse!"

I turned away from her, sick at heart. The fugitive belonged to a race that had murdered my parents and made my childhood's years one long terror. At my first communion I had, indeed, with sobs and tears, renounced my boyish plans of vengeance, yet the old repulsion was still strong. It seemed to be part of my physical nature, and I could not overcome it. Every instinct rebelled against the thought of risking my life for creatures who filled me with disgust and a wild, unreasoning terror. Anything but this, Alix! anything but this!

"Aren't there others that could do this thing?" I asked, falteringly. "Aren't there abolitionists at Amherstburg or Grosse Île? They are fifteen miles nearer than we."

"They do not know of it," said Émile McNiff. "Father learned of it accidentally through one of the deputies at Detroit. The Duncans were over here with their ice-boat, but none of us know the river as you do, and there is no time to lose if we would be back before daylight."

"If I do not go, will you give it up?" I asked of the boys.

"We will go alone, and go now," they answered, without hesitation. That decided me. I could not see them go alone. Every impulse of manliness rose in me; I tried to forget the object of the expedition and only remember the boys' risk, for I knew the river far better than they, and should be responsible for their lives if I permitted them to face the danger without a guide.

"Get out the boat, and I will put on my togs and join you," I said.

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Here Alix suddenly threw her arms around my neck and kissed me. "My own dear, brave Rodéric!" she cried.

It hurt me, I confess, that Alix should think it a matter of courage, and that she should not have guessed the real reason of my hesitation. She knew my tragic story, and yet she did not seem to remember for an instant the reason I had to feel repugnance for the object of our expedition. She was all enthusiasm, and flew round to help the boys trim the lanterns and pull on their coats. I took down the doctor's gun from its rack, and was pulling on my cardigan jacket and fur-cap when little Étienne crept to my side and timidly thrust something into my hand. I looked down. She was a strange child, usually very loquacious and animated, but on critical occasions very reticent and quiet. She stood there, black-eyed, intent, silent, while I took from her the little picture. It was one of those religious prints that the French delight in, and represented her patron saint, the martyred Stephen, kneeling down, amid a shower of stones, and with angelic, upturned countenance blessing and praying for his enemies, while underneath were written the words, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

It touched me to the heart that this child should be the only one to remember my past and understand all that the task before us signified to me. I felt sorry that I had ever been cross to her; but there was no time for words now, I could only thrust the little picture under my jacket and kiss her a hurried good-bye, with a murmured "Pray for us, Nita," which was my pet name for her when we were on good terms.

She squeezed my big fist between her two soft, firm little hands for an instant and let me go without a word. The front door suddenly opened, and

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there stood my grandfather, breathless and panting, eagerly beckoning to us.

"Run, boys, run!" he gasped. "There is not a moment to lose. The sheriffs fear a rescue, and are going to board the tug to-night. They have a small fleet of ice-boats, and have secured pilots, and mean to head off any possible attempt of the abolitionists. They suspected me and were watching the house. I had my rig brought round to the front door, and then I slid out of the back door down to the river, and have skated all the way up here. Heaven pity my poor old bones! I haven't done such a thing in twenty years; but they sail to-night at nine o'clock, and I knew that if I warned you in time it might help you get a few minutes the start of them."

We were hurrying down to the pier as he finished, where the boys, having muffled the lantern, were stumbling round in the darkness. Clouds chased each other rapidly across the face of the waning moon. The wind blew in gusts from the northeast.

"May the saints keep you out of air-holes, for you never can see by this light," grumbled the doctor. "Have you plenty of matches? Take this flask of cherry cordial; you may need it. Steer for Kingsville with your passenger if the sheriffs get between you and Amherstburg. Look out for the currents, and beware of the mid-channel; it is open in spots."

My grandfather, trembling from his late exertion and from emotion, suddenly clasped me to his breast. "Heaven bless and keep you Rory, my boy—my only boy!" he sobbed. "It is hard to let you go, and for such a purpose, but I am old and sinful; I need God's mercy; and He has said, 'Inasmuch as ye do it to the least of these my brethren—' " Here

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he broke down completely and pushed me from him. I sprang upon the ice-boat, where the boys were already on the forward runners, clinging to the shrouds, and, taking the tiller, I shot diagonally across the river and sought the protection of the Canadian shore.

CHAPTER IV

IT was a wild chase that night. We had a little the lead of the sheriff's posse as we drew out of Windsor, hugging the shore along the Sandwich road, where we were somewhat in the shadow. We could see the three ice-boats plainly as they started from the dock at the foot of Woodward Avenue, sailing close to the American shore to avoid the thinner ice of the mid-channel. At Fighting Island we crossed the river and skulked along the American shore between Écorse and Trenton until beyond the Mamajudy Light, while they chose the wider middle channel, the usual route of the large craft and steamboats. The moon was continuously under a cloud, and we felt confident of having escaped detection. As we neared Amherstburg they crossed to the Canadian shore, sailing to leeward of Grosse Île and Bois Blanc; but I had foreseen this probable move, and had quietly kept to windward of Grosse Île. In the narrow, marshy stream that divides this long island from the American shore, the ice was fearfully rough and full of air-holes, but the wind was steady abaft beam; there was no danger of being seen, and we went bumping and bounding along at high speed, taking the air-holes at flying leaps. But when we shot out into Lake Erie, below Sugar Island, further concealment was impossible. The wind shifted, the clouds cleared, and a flood of moonlight poured over the vast ice-fields. The

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diff's boats were making a series of short tacks each the tug, which lay about six miles off the Canadian coast. I resolved to cut directly across my path as if bound for Kingsville. I should have covered more ground than they by so doing, but, on the other hand, I should gain slightly in time by being to come about only once. We now made an effort to avoid them, and were plainly visible as we crossed their bows. They hailed us, but we answered that we were Canadian curlers, bound for Kingsville, and, as we affected indifference of man-aging carelessly over the frame and humming notes of French folk-songs, they seemed not to suspect us. At any rate, they did not try to over-haul us, though they took the precaution to watch us keenly. "Vive la Canadienne!" sang Tom Dun-lop, at his loudest and cheeriest.

"Vive la Canadienne!
Vole, mon cœur, vole!
Vive la Canadienne!
Et ses jolis yeux doux!
Tout doux!"

My breath was nearly knocked out of us as we slipped over the rough ice and clung for dear life to our shrouds, but our voices never quivered as we sang heartily in the chorus at the end of every line. *Vole, mon cœur, vole!"*
We were walking away from them in fine style, and still we sang on:

"Ainsi le temps se passe—
Vole, mon cœur, vole!
Ainsi le temps se passe—
Il est, ma foi, bien doux!
Bien doux!"

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About two miles down the coast we reached a favoring angle, and, coming about quickly, headed straight for the tug. The wind had steadied into a small gale, and we were sailing close-hauled, and sped like an arrow before it. Then at once the other boats understood our purpose, and the race began in dead earnest. Two of the boats were poorly managed; they bumped about in the rough ice, and soon slewed round and spilled over, sending their crews spinning over the surface of the lake; but the third was superbly handled. I knew beyond a doubt that there must be one of the old Indian pilots at the tiller, for had I not, even as a lad of fifteen, won prizes in races on Lake Sainte-Claire above seasoned pilots old enough to be my father? and had I ever been beaten save by an Indian? Who knew the currents and channels of the Detroit or l'Irrie as I knew them, save the old half-breed pilots François Vadebonceur and Jacques Antaya? I had reckoned on reaching the ice-bound tug about three minutes ahead of my rival, which would give us ample time to take the fugitive on board and get a good start on the homeward race, but I had not foreseen the skill that would be matched against mine. I could hardly forbear exclamations of wonder and admiration as I saw the nicety with which every angle of advantage was calculated, and the art with which the tiller was handled. They were gaining on us rapidly, and my advantage now became a question no longer of minutes, but of seconds. For an instant, when they were on the leeward tack, we were almost face to face, and I could plainly discern the stolid, brown countenance of Antaya guiding the rudder-shoe. Our eyes met. I dared not make a sign, but, though the Indian sat imperturbably, and no change came into his eyes, yet I knew instinctively that he

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recognized me, and that he now learned for the first time that it was his friend and pupil who guided the boat he was pursuing. There was a momentary hesitation on the Indian's boat, a slight awkwardness in handling the sheets that was imperceptible to any but a practised eye, but it was enough to make my heart beat exultantly. I had a friend in the enemy's camp! Without betraying himself, An-taya had won for me the instant of time that I needed. He was heading for the bow of the tug and I was aiming for the stern, where I could already see the captain and the engineer standing, glasses in hand, watching the race, uncertain which was friend or foe. A wide strip of clear water lay between us. "Lie down, boys; trim the boat and hold on for a spill!" I called. It was a desperate chance. The crack seemed to rush towards us, for we were flying along at the rate of seventy miles an hour. I gave the tiller an almost imperceptible push; the boat rose like a bird to the leap, and we were across the chasm before we could see that we had reached it. I let her go on at full speed till we had almost shot past the tug; then, gripping the ice with the shoe, we swept round with the windward runner high in the air and brought up alongside. The boys grasped the side of the tug with their boat-hooks and called excitedly for the fugitive to board us without an instant's delay. But, alas! the captain was uncertain and cautious and by the time we had exchanged the signals of the "Underground Railroad," and he had satisfied himself of our friendly intentions, the precious moment had slipped by; the sheriff's boat was so near that the men sprang off it and, jumping over the broken ice, began to climb the tug's bow. Quick as thought I seized the gun and, springing aboard, advanced to meet the sheriff. He was fol-

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lowed by three tough-looking specimens of humanity, deputies sworn in for the dirty work on hand. Antaya crept stealthily behind them.

"Gentlemen," I said, in as lordly a manner as I knew how to assume, and endeavoring to look perfectly self-possessed, in spite of the loud beating of my heart, "to what do we owe the honor of this visit?"

The sheriff gave a short laugh. "I guess by your actions you know pretty well without asking."

"This tug," I went on, feeling like a boy in a book, though devoutly hoping that they did not notice the uncontrollable quivering of my lips and nostrils, "is the property of the Canadian Transfer Company. All her passengers are under the protection of the laws of the colony."

"Excuse *me*," replied the sheriff; "she is hired and run by an American skipper, and she is American soil. She has on board a fugitive from American justice. As the representative of American law, I claim him, and propose to take him back with me. And let me warn you, young man, that if you attempt to interfere it will be my duty to arrest you."

"You will arrest me at your peril!" I exclaimed. "I am not amenable to American law. I am a Spanish citizen, a subject of Isabella the Second, and whoever lays a hand on me is answerable to the government of Spain. My companions are subjects of Queen Victoria, and England will protect her own."

I do not know what their respective majesties would have said to our defiance of the laws of a friendly nation, but I could see the sheriff hesitate. Antaya was creeping about and muttering to himself in an uncanny manner. I caught one word

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constantly reiterated in the Ottawa language. It was "powder, powder, powder." An idea flashed into my brain. The engineer had taken his stand by my side. Something in his lank, raw-boned person and keen eye emboldened me, and I said, bravely, "I give you warning, Mr. Sheriff, that these are desperate men. They prefer death to American justice. They will blow up the boat, and themselves with it, rather than see their fellow-being fall into your hands. Let me inform you that powder is stored in the stern, and the nearer we keep to the bows the safer we are."

I took three steps forward. They all instinctively drew three steps backward; then they looked ashamed and burst into coarse laughter.

"Oh, that's no go! What are you giving us?" they jeered. But the Indian began to tremble violently, and jabbered and gesticulated excitedly. The deputies watched him out of the corners of their eyes, and I could see that his actions made them a little nervous; but the sheriff stepped boldly forward, drawing his pistol.

"I regret to tell you, gentlemen, that the law must be enforced, and we are prepared to enforce it," he said, firmly. The deputies took courage and advanced slightly. I laid my finger on the trigger of my gun.

"The signal to blow up the boat is the first shot fired," I said, warningly.

The engineer sprang below. "Are you ready, Mr. Brown?" I called. "Ay, ready, sir!" he called back, as he disappeared. The deputies glanced at each other uneasily.

"One step forward and I fire!" I cried.

"Nonsense!" said the sheriff, sturdily stepping forward. I pulled the trigger and fired into the air.

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Instantly a ripping, tearing noise was heard; we were enveloped in a cloud of steam, and the tug shook violently from stem to stern. The Indian let out a blood-curdling yell, rushed for the bow of the tug, and began climbing over, howling and jabbering and flinging his arms wildly about. His terror was infectious, and the panic-stricken deputies hurled themselves headlong overboard after him. The Indian grabbed them, pulled them about, and shoved them on to his ice-boat, sprang aboard, let go the sheets, and in an instant was speeding for Detroit River, still whooping and gesticulating madly. Before the thick steam had cleared enough for us to see, the skipper had hauled the fugitive up from the hold and was helping him over the stern into our ice-boat. The sheriff and I stood alone facing each other. "Don't wait for me, boys; I shall be all right, and there'll be more room!" I called, and with a sigh of relief dimly discerned the ghost-like form of the white boat glide by the stern, and heard its iron-shod runners click over the ice and the whistle of the wind through the wire rigging. A moment later the skipper was shouting to the engineer to stop that confounded noise, the steam was shut off, the tug ceased to shake, and the smoke slowly cleared away.

The sheriff took the matter calmly. He was a sensible man, who did not wholly like the errand on which he was employed, and was perhaps glad on the whole to be relieved of an unpleasant duty. The engineer emerged from below and gave me a long, comprehensive wink.

"Young fellar," said he, "I'll answer to anything on a pinch, but my name ain't Brown—it's Haliburton." He offered me some tobacco, which I refused. I felt myself grow strangely weak, now that the strain was over.

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"I always keep up steam," he went on; "you never know when 'twill be wanted. It's sorter handy to be ready for anything that may turn up."

"It seems to me," remarked the sheriff, "that your powder kinder went up in smoke."

I wanted to laugh; I tried to laugh, but somehow I found myself crying instead. I was trembling from head to foot. Excitement had kept me up till now, but I had been intensely wrought up, and the hazard had been great. Had the sheriff and his deputies been as well acquainted as the Indian and I with the colonial history of Detroit, my bold experiment would not have succeeded. How often I had joked Antaya about his Wyandotte ancestors who attacked the little English war-ship that was bringing relief to the beleaguered garrison at Detroit, then besieged by the great Chief Pontiac and his braves! The Wyandottes had almost overpowered the crew when the captain gave orders to blow up the ship, and instantly every father's son among the Indians took a leap into the blue waters of the river and swam ashore as if the fiends were after him, while the laughing captain countermanded his orders and brought his ship safely up to the palisades of the little town. Luckily for me this night the sheriff and his men were naturalized citizens of a late immigration and wholly unconscious of the fact that Detroit had a colonial history. But instead of laughing with Captain Jacobs of the *Gladwin*, I could only stand there shaking in every limb and crying like a baby. The big-framed engineer took me up bodily in his arms and laid me on a bench in the cabin. He dashed some water on my face and poured some whiskey from a capacious flask down my throat. When I grew a little quieter he

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patted my cheek kindly and rubbed my hands between his great horny fists.

"How old air ye, anyway?" he asked.

"Sixteen," I sobbed, in a low, shamed voice.

"Sho!" he said, stroking my hair almost tenderly. "Why, ye ain't no more 'n a child!"

CHAPTER V

IT was glorious Christmas weather. The snow covered the ground and sparkled under the bright, wintry sunshine. The fashionable avenues—Jefferson on the east side, Lafayette and Cass on the west—were alive with sleighs, the bells jingling merrily, the spirited horses dashing along frisky and free. The broad river, frozen from shore to shore, was gay with skating and ice-boat parties, while many adventurous spirits were speeding their horses over its wide course, and every one's nerves tingled with the excitement and joy of living.

The second day after our return from the midnight rescue of the fugitive slave was the eve of Alix's wedding. The officers at Fort Wayne were to give an entertainment that afternoon to the betrothed pair. Young and old, we were all invited to drive down the river in sleighs, have a dance and a hot supper at the post, and return home by moonlight. I did not look forward to the festivities with any feeling of pleasure. Alix was happy—radiantly happy; but it was one thing to see Alix happy, and another thing—and one that tried my soul to its depths—to see her lover so happy. I was still a little shaken from my adventures, though I did not like to acknowledge it, and I would rather have stayed at home and moped than go to the fort to see Alix and her lover dance. But Alix came herself to beg me to go, for she was very tender to me in those days.

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"Dear Rodéric, we must have one more dance together. Nonsense, you are not too young! You should not remind me, sir, that I am older than you; that is a great impertinence. Have we not always been playmates? Indeed, I shall give the very first dance to you before any one else. If you do not come, I shall think you have not forgiven me for sending you out on Lake Erie that dreadful night."

"Forgiven you! Pshaw! that wasn't anything!" I said, disdainfully. Boylike, I hated to have my exploit made much of.

"Not anything! Why, dear Éric, I have wanted ever since to ask you to forgive me my thoughtlessness. I never once remembered till after you were gone, and little Nita reminded me of it, that you had reason to feel differently about the slaves from what we do. I was so sorry! believe me, so sorry!" Here her voice grew very soft, and the pretty gray eyes filled with tears. "You have no idea how I suffered all that night through, Éric, for it kept coming over me how dangerous an expedition it was, and what dreadful things might happen to you. Do you know," and she shuddered slightly, "I could not get out of my head the remembrance of that evening we saw the *Chasse Galère* together? It was an evil omen, and I prayed God on my knees that it might not mean death to you. I was so frightened—oh, so frightened—for I seemed to see it all over again as we saw it then together. There was the ghostly canoe and the Phantom Huntsman chasing northward over the clouds, and all through that dreadful night I heard the baying of the hound! Oh, it was awful, awful! I cannot yet get it out of my ears. Sometimes, when we are all singing and laughing so gayly, if there comes a pause I hear that fatal sound. Do you wonder that I feared I had driven

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you to your death when it was so long before we heard of your safety?"

"The deputies had a big story to tell about the tug blowing up, I suppose," I said, laughing, and trying to cheer her up with the funny side of our adventure. "You ought to have seen them scramble over the side of the tug, and Antaya shoving them along. It was as good as a play."

"The boys had to rush their boat up to Kingsville, as the other deputies were between them and Amherstburg, and we heard nothing till you yourself came over from Windsor, after you had been taken off by the Canadian sledgers. It was a long suspense. I never prayed in my life as I did that night, but God saved you to us, dear Rodéric, and the Phantom Huntsman was cheated of his prey! So we must celebrate the escape and dance a last dance together."

I promised her, and she threw her arms round my neck again, and kissed me as she had when she sent me off that night. And Alexandrine's kiss stayed with me for many a day and was blessed to me, for I vowed that none other should obliterate it save one as good and innocent, and it was as the seal of my youthful virtue.

When our sleighs started from Hamtramck that afternoon, Alix and her lover laughingly declared that they would be the last to go, as they did not wish to be watched, and there was much joking at the young couple's expense. All were singing, gayly,

"C'est la belle Française,
Allons gai!
C'est la belle Française,
Allons gai!
Qui veut se marier,
Qui veut se marier,
Ma luron lurette,
Ma luron luré!"

We were to drive down on the frozen river by day-

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light and return by the fort road in the moonlight. In order to have a long afternoon at the post, we set forth immediately after the noon meal in light cutters, wrapped up to the ears in fur robes and with hot bricks disposed at our feet. There was much cheering for the betrothed as each sleigh started off. I can see her now, blushing and happy, warmly wrapped in furs, her laughing face framed in its pink hood, waving her hand to us, and singing,

*"Le rossignol chante pour celles
Qui n'ont pas de mari;
Il ne chante pas pour moi,
Car j'en ai un joli,
Gai, lon la, gai le rosier!"*

The youngest members of the party, little Étienne Chabert, with Archange and Fifine McNiff, were apportioned to my sleigh. Nita shrieked for the front seat by my side, and of course gained her point, for her parents indulged her in every wish of her heart. I did not regret it, for, child as she was, Nita, when good-humored, was a fascinating companion, vivacious, talkative, wonderfully mature and well-informed for her years. The long drive passed quickly enough, for the shaggy Canadian ponies intrusted to me were spirited, plucky, tireless little animals. We had named them Titi Carabi and Toto Carabo, from the old comic song of "Compère Guilleri," which Nita sang merrily as they trotted off.

*"Il était un p'tit homme
Qui s'appelait Guilleri,
Carabi;
Il s'en fut à la chasse,
À la chasse aux perdrix.
Carabi,
Titi Carabi,
Toto Carabo,
Compère Guilleri,
Te laisseras-tu mouri?"*

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My small companion kept up an incessant and amusing chatter. She knew as well as I every point on the river, its historical associations, and all the weird legends connected with it, from the farms at Grosse Pointe, on Lake Sainte-Claire, where the "Lutin" rides the farmers' horses in the dead of the night and bewitches their cows, to the island of Put-in-Bay, on Lake Erie, where Perry gained his famous victory in the War of 1812. We knew Windmill Point, where the will-o'-the-wisp leads the unwary astray and they cannot escape until they have ground the grist in the devil's mill; and the shores of Belle Isle, where the first missionaries, in 1669, destroyed the great idol of the Manitou, while its shattered fragments turned into rattlesnakes to guard the island from further desecration from the white man. Our own suburb of Hamtramck (named for the gallant colonel of "Mad Anthony" Wayne's campaigns, the first American commandant of Detroit) had been the scene of bloody fights, where the English, led by the rash Dalyell, were massacred by the Indians, under their famous chief Pontiac. Then we drew nigh Detroit, where the Sieur de la Mothe-Cadillac, founder of the city in 1701, encountered the little red Demon of the Straits, the "Nain Rouge," and fell under its fateful curse. Below the city the "Dames Blanches," the little white fairies, held their nightly revels, and at the foot of the trees where they danced healing waters gushed forth which have given the suburb its name of "Springwells." But under the tree whence the Loup Garou sprang on his victims the waters turned into sulphur.

Étienne was a little nervous about the Loup Garou, the werewolf who walked on his hind-legs, dressed like a man, and was very fond of carrying

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off young maidens. He was held up as a warning in the good old times to all forward young girls who wandered away from their chaperons. He seemed to have had a special weakness for brides, and it was this point that disturbed poor Nita.

"What if he should carry off our Alix?" she exclaimed, trembling. "Alix is so pretty! He always takes them just before or just after the wedding."

"He is also fond of nice, plump little girls with rosy cheeks," I suggested, slyly. "One of those would do as well."

"No, he likes brides best, and Alix is so sweet!"

The case certainly seemed dark for Alix, but we comforted ourselves with the thought that the Loup Garou had not been seen in the neighborhood of late years, and probably would not show himself while there were such crowds on the river. We were now nearing Fort Wayne, and were trotting merrily over the ice, when a watchman stationed at that point warned us of air-holes. He was none too soon, for the ice had already cracked alarmingly under the runners, and the ponies trembled nervously. A large block of ice broke away almost directly under us, and as it floated off left the blue current of the river within a foot of the sleigh. I thought it best to get out of our dangerous surroundings as quickly as possible, and had raised the whip to lash the ponies, when little Étienne at my side made a sudden spring, and had almost leaped out of the sleigh into the icy waters before I could catch her and haul her back.

"Sit still!" I shouted, thrusting her roughly down into the seat. "Don't act like a fool! We shall be out of this in a moment."

The ponies ran nimbly forward. There were a few ominous crackings, but we were soon on the thicker ice and could breathe freely again. Then

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I turned round and gave Étienne a piece of my mind.

"Haven't you more sense than to jump right into the icy river and get drowned? Catch me ever driving with you again, if you are going to lose your wits and jump every time the ponies prick up their ears!"

"I didn't lose my wits!" she exclaimed, indignantly. "I wasn't scared a bit! I just jumped because I feared perhaps the sleigh was too heavy. I weigh sixty-five pounds, and I thought it might make a difference."

"You thought a great deal to very little purpose," I remarked. "We should have had to stop and try to save you, and so perhaps all got drowned. You should have climbed over to my side of the sleigh where the ice was sound if you were going to jump at all."

"I thought of it, but it would take longer, and I was afraid you would stop me," she sobbed.

"Well, don't be a cry-baby," I said, a little more kindly, as I tucked the fur robes warmly about her. But Nita was angry now and pushed them back again. "You are mean and hateful! You call me names when I try to save you," exclaimed the child. "If we were not life-long friends, if I had not known you from my infancy, I would make you suffer for it!"

"That consideration has never deterred you heretofore," I remarked, sweetly. "Don't let it do so now." She sobbed on for a while, and we did not say much for the rest of the drive. To tell the truth, I felt very tenderly and admiringly towards the child, but I did not wish to let her know it, for she was conceited and spoiled enough already without my making a heroine of her for her crazy impulse.

We were the first to reach Fort Wayne, and drove

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into the garrison, where the —th Infantry band was playing on the parade-ground before the commanding officer's quarters. Other sleighs followed rapidly. We were brought into the warm rooms and served with hot coffee, after which we only awaited the appearance of the betrothed pair to adjourn to the Casino for the dance. The lovers were a little tardy, but we only joked about it at first, it was so natural that they should linger in the glorious winter sunshine. Four o'clock struck and all began to grow uneasy. The sun was sinking. A distant sound like the baying of a hound made my blood run cold and my knees tremble under me. Just then Étienne crept up and whispered, sobbingly:

"Oh, Éric, Éric! what if the Loup Garou had really run off with our Alix? Oh, I'm so afraid! — so afraid! I know it is the Loup Garou!"

"Nonsense!" I said, severely. "You know perfectly well there is no such thing as the Loup Garou. It is just a nurses' tale to frighten naughty children with, and you, a Christian child, ought to know better than to be afraid of it."

She went off meekly enough, but I could hear her muttering to herself, "It is true, just the same."

It was now five o'clock and very dark on the river. The band had ceased playing, and gloom had settled on the spirits of the company. The suspense grew intolerable. Dr. Chabert and the commanding officer, with the surgeon, put on their fur caps and overcoats and went out into the darkness. We looked at each other apprehensively.

I never knew how we first heard of it. There were pale faces and hurrying figures. I dared not ask a question. Nita clung to my hand; she was as white as wax, but she said not a word. One of the women screamed, Mrs. Chabert was in hysterics, and the

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young people were led off into another room. Hardly knowing what I was doing, I wandered down in the bitter cold, without hat or coat, to the water's edge, where the surgeon and some soldiers were trying to resuscitate the young lieutenant. Too deeply absorbed in their happiness to heed the signals, the lovers had driven into an air-hole. The horses saved themselves by a spring, but the sleigh was overturned and its occupants hurled into the cold river. The young man had striven to hold Alexandrine's head above the water till help should arrive, but the current was strong and the ice broke repeatedly under his grasp. They found him just as, benumbed and exhausted, his hold had failed. His body was brought to the shore by the soldiers, but our pretty Alix never came home again!

And all through that fatal night the mourners heard the ceaseless baying of a hound over the Côte du Nord!

CHAPTER VI

TRAGEDY had marked the opening years of my infancy, and now it had stamped itself upon my youth. The shock of Alix's death threw me into a state of nervous depression and gloomy forebodings, and I missed the house which had been my second home, for Dr. Chabert had taken his family to Europe for change of scene. It was thought best that I should go to school, and I was sent across the river to Assumption College, at Sandwich, in Upper Canada, for nearly two centuries the seat of a French mission. But my free, irregular life had unfitted me for the routine and discipline of a boarding-school, and I suffered acutely from attempting to submit myself to its regulations. I was overcome by an agony of homesickness, and in less than three weeks I had run away, had stolen a boat to cross the river, had climbed the bank, rushed through the orchard, across the Grosse Pointe turnpike, up the garden-walk, and, opening the doors of our dear old house, had thrown myself into my grandfather's arms.

"What does this mean?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, Pépé, punish me if you will, but don't ever send me away again! I shall die without you!"

The old man held me close to his heart, and I could feel his hot tears on my face.

"By Heaven, Rodéric! I should have died myself if you had stayed away a day longer!"

According to my trustee, Mr. Arthur, I should

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have been soundly thrashed and sent back to school without an hour's delay; but there were some points on which my trustee and my grandfather never could agree, and my education was one. Mr. Arthur had been named in my father's will as executor and trustee for his estate. He lived in New York, and rarely came to see us, but just at this time he happened to be paying the Chevalier, as my grandfather was commonly called, a short visit, and it was evident that my escapade made a bad impression upon him, and that he considered me an ignorant, unruly lad, spoiled and mismanaged. He was a distant kinsman of ours. The first refugee M'Carthy, before he became a French general and was metamorphosed into the Marquis de Macarty, had had two sons. The younger fled with his father to France, but the elder submitted to Cromwell, retained the Irish estates, and changed his name to MacArthur. Later, the name was further Anglicized, and the descendant who sought his fortune in the New World had reduced it by a syllable to Arthur. Mr. Arthur was a lineal descendant of this renegade M'Carthy. He maintained stoutly that a man had as good a right to take from his name as to add to it, that the M'Carthy who turned Frenchman, accepted honors from France, and added a syllable to his name was in exactly the same position as he who turned Englishman and chopped off a syllable; there was nothing to choose between them.

"You might as well say," declared my grandfather, hotly, "that you can throw away a third of your fortune and be as rich as if you had kept it entire. Did the M'Carthy cease to be an Irishman because the French king, whom he honored with his services, called him the Chevalier de Macarty and made him a marquis? Isn't Rodéric de Ma-

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carty recognized instantly all the world over to be an Irishman as well as if his name was still Rory M'Carthy? But who would do such an honor to James Arthur as to take him for other than an Anglo-Saxon?"

Mr. Arthur was a graduate of Yale College, and had spent many years in European travel. My grandfather held his business abilities in great respect, and frequently got him to make small investments for him, but their views of life were taken from totally dissimilar standpoints.

"What do you intend the boy to be?" asked Mr. Arthur.

"A gentleman," replied the Chevalier.

"I mean, what do you intend him to do?" corrected the other.

"His duty as a Christian," returned the old man.

"Shall you send him to Yale, or do you intend to patronize the new University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor?" asked Mr. Arthur, who saw that they would never approach an understanding except through explicit terms.

"Yale? Ann Arbor? What the devil should he do in either?"

"But, my dear sir, to be a gentleman, Rodéric must go to college, and it is time to think of his preparatory education."

"Education, sir," proclaimed my grandfather, raising his voice—"education can be neither preparatory nor final. A college has nothing to do with it. Rodéric's education, sir, began in his cradle, and it will end in his grave. *I* am his education, sir! His home, his church, his playmates, his books, his occupations—these are his education!"

"We need not quarrel as to words, Chevalier," urged my trustee. "I think we shall agree that as

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Rodéric grows older he will need to know certain things to fit him for a career, either in business or in one of the professions. At present he is ignorant of all that the world demands in the way of a practical education."

"The world! There you are again!" sneered the angry old gentleman. "I will let you know how ignorant, how unfitted for your world Rodéric is at present. He writes and speaks French correctly and elegantly, reads Latin with facility, and has spoken Spanish from his cradle. His taste in literature is excellent, his knowledge of history more extensive than that of many grown men. He is well instructed in religion and ethics; his manners and address need but a little wider experience to be all that can be desired. He has sound health and no bad habits. He can ride, shoot, swim, fence, box, and manage a boat as skilfully as any on the Lakes. How is this for a 'practical education' at sixteen? Can your 'world' suggest a better?"

"It is good, very good, as far as it goes," admitted Mr. Arthur, though he doubtless thought my accomplishments greatly exaggerated by my partial relative; "but," he suggested, politely, "you do not wish him to be merely a sportsman or a country farmer, and yet I fear he is lacking in many things essential to a man of the world."

"Did I say I wished him to be a man of the world?" queried the old Frenchman, sharply.

"What then?" asked Mr. Arthur, frowning.

"A cultured Christian gentleman, sir!" shouted the Chevalier.

"A gentleman of the world, if you will," suggested Mr. Arthur, all suavity.

"There you have the advantage of me. I do not understand the term," replied the old man, smiling ironically.

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Mr. Arthur was now angered beyond endurance. "Your boy, sir, is an ignoramus. He knows nothing that will be of any use to him. What need has an American for French or Spanish? The lad is old enough to enter college next year, and he isn't fitted to enter a grammar-school. A little monkish Latin may help him read his mass prayers, but it won't keep him from being hooted out of an American high-school. What does he know of mathematics? What does he know of science? What does he know that will be of any practical use to him?"

A gleam of malicious triumph shone in my grandfather's eye, but he only said, quietly, "Rory, my boy, go fetch your drawings to show to Mr. Arthur."

Nothing loath, I collected my precious papers and laid them before my guardian. They presented ambitious schemes for the benefit of the commerce of the Great Lakes—mighty docks, mammoth bridges and light-houses, tunnels of superb proportions, embankments and causeways for the beautifying of the river shores, locks and canals, and many other enterprises of magnitude. My grandfather, feeling that he had taught me all he knew, had been having me privately tutored in mathematics and mechanics by an officer of the United States Engineer Corps stationed in Detroit. The preceding summer had been devoted to surveying and perspective drawing, and during the past winter I had received almost daily instruction in the higher mathematics and physics from my tutor, and had spent my evenings studying and drawing under the relentless eye of my grandfather. No doubt my ambitious sketches would have lacked many things in the practised eye of a trained engineer, but they showed some knowledge of geometry and mechanics and no little skill in drawing, and were executed with an elabora-

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tion of detail very imposing to the uninitiated. It was evident that Mr. Arthur was equally impressed and taken by surprise. For a few moments he only gasped in astonishment and incredulity.

"An ignoramus, eh?" chuckled the delighted Chevalier. "Doesn't know any mathematics, any science, anything useful, eh?" and he leaned back in his chair with a hearty guffaw. "Would you like to put to him a few practical questions, eh?"

But Mr. Arthur ignored my grandfather's irony. He had a plan for me, which was no less than to take me with him to Paris and enter me at the École des Ponts et Chaussées, to be prepared for the profession of civil engineer.

"The truth is, my boy," explained my trustee, "it has become a matter of necessity for you to have a profession. Your fortune, I regret to say, is seriously diminished. It was impossible for me to conduct your Cuban estate properly except at a loss. I have had to mortgage it. Indeed, I had such difficulty in securing a loan upon it that I was obliged to come to your rescue and furnish the money myself, though at a serious inconvenience."

"I'm sure I am very grateful," I murmured.

"Don't mention it. It was no more than my duty. It had seemed to me best to invest part of your little property in Michigan securities, that when you came of age you might control it on the spot, but I regret to say that the lumber and mining industries have been slow in developing. Taxes and assessments have been high, and I have sometimes been obliged to advance you money to meet the indebtedness. It seems to me wisest, under the circumstances, to invest the remainder of your capital in your professional education. Nothing will bring

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you better or surer returns than that, and where could you obtain a finer education than in Paris?"

I confess to being almost stupefied with amazement and chagrin at learning that the fortune I had been brought up to expect had practically vanished. It was very generally supposed that my Cuban estates were worth vast sums, and Mr. Arthur, the executor and trustee, was universally regarded as capable and fortunate in business. That my property should be so nearly gone seemed inconceivable, yet, if it were so, it was plainly a necessity that I should fit myself as thoroughly and as rapidly as possible for a professional career, for I should be dependent on my own efforts after I reached my majority, and not, as I had supposed, the dispenser of an almost princely fortune. It was decided that I should start at once for Paris with Mr. Arthur and his nephew, Montgomerie Moir, who was to study art there, and that my grandfather would follow in the early summer, as soon as the affairs of the farm should be arranged, its management transferred to the thrifty Morisseau, and the house closed. It was fortunate that my preparations were hurried and that we were both kept busy till the last moment, as we thus had little time to reflect on our temporary separation. Nevertheless, I found myself full of melancholy forebodings, perhaps natural after my late experiences.

The evening before my departure from Hamtramck, we sat together on the veranda of the old house, my grandfather and I. It was a warm night of early spring, the stately elms were clothed in a delicate veil of young green, the calm moonlight flooded the orchard and glistened and swayed on the broad bosom of the noble river. Lovely Belle Isle lay dark and mysterious, like a black, slumbering swan athwart

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its path. I already felt a pang of homesickness seize me at the thought of the years that must intervene before I should return to this spot, so beautiful and so dear to me. My grandfather, too, seemed steeped in sad thought.

"Rory, my boy, you may call me superstitious if you will," he said at last, uneasily, "but I had an adventure this morning that haunts my memory and I cannot shake it off. I was riding up the road looking about me and thinking with pride and satisfaction of this fair heritage that will some day pass to you, when an old man addressed me and asked me for an alms. He was a stranger, very short, misshapen, and repulsive in appearance, and with red hair. I passed by him somewhat haughtily, for his ugliness repelled me, when he turned towards the orchard, and, pointing to the river, muttered some sort of outlandish curse. I had urged my horse on a few steps, but my heart began to upbraid me. Why should I refuse a charity to an old man simply because he had a forbidding countenance and a disagreeable shape? It was probably those very misfortunes that had reduced him to beggary. I turned my horse to go back after the stranger and do what I could for him, but lo! he was nowhere to be seen! Up and down the road, across the orchards, over the field, through the lane I rode, but not a sign of human life could I detect. He had disappeared as utterly as if he had existed only in my imagination. Rodéric, what does it remind you of?"

"Le Nain Rouge," I said, with a start.

"The little, misshapen figure, the red hair," continued my grandfather. "I cannot get them out of my mind. Do you remember the Sieur de la Mothe-Cadillac, how he had gained riches and honors in New France, and was planning a goodly heritage

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for his descendants, when he was told by the witch that he must beware of offending the Demon of the Straits or all his broad lands would go into strange hands? You know the rest."

"Yes," I said, never at a loss for a legend. "He treated scornfully the little red dwarf who approached him as he was laying the foundation of Fort Ponchartrain, at the Detroit, and the dwarf foretold that his children should never enjoy the princely inheritance he had prepared for them. The Sieur de Cadillac laughed at the prediction, but his wife believed it, and all came out even as the Nain Rouge foretold. All his seigneuries at Port Royal, his copper-mines on Lake Huron, his marquisate of the Detroit, all his vast feudal possessions in New France, were forfeited. His children never inherited so much as an acre of his great domains."

"I have not seigneuries or copper-mines or vast domains, but such as I have is for you, and these fields and orchards and forests, this house, and, above all, this beautiful view of river and isle, these are the pride of my life, the joy of my eye. I shall cling to them, Rodéric, for your sake. If only you are spared to me, my boy, I shall fight for your inheritance and defy the little red Demon of the Straits! And yet," he added, ruefully, "I wish—I don't mean to be superstitious, for the Church calls that a sin—but I wish I had not refused an alms to this strange dwarf. Heaven forgive me, Rodéric; but I shouldn't feel so badly about it if his hair had not been red!"

CHAPTER VII

MY introduction to Paris life under the auspices of Mr. Arthur and of his kinsman, Montgomerie Moir, was of a nature to have filled my grandfather with dismay and to confirm his idea of the degeneracy of the Arthurs. He had given me no instructions when I passed under my trustee's care, confiding to that gentleman's honor and to my own well-trained conscience; but there was danger from one source, at least, that his confidence would be abused. I understood plainly that Mr. Arthur was lacking in honor when he tried to draw me into associations that my grandfather would not approve of, and I made my studies the excuse to escape from the life of dissipation which both Mr. Arthur and his nephew seemed determined to draw me into. The portly French colonel, who was Mr. Arthur's intimate associate in all his pastimes, boldly protected me in my stand. There was little, perhaps, to choose between the men from a moral point of view, but the colonel respected my principles where my guardian would have perverted them.

"I do not wish my boys to be as I am," said the gay old sinner. "I have no religion, no morality, but do I wish my boys to be without these things? No! I send them to the Brothers' school. Later, if they lose their faith and their innocence, they have only themselves to blame, for I, at least, have given them every moral and religious advantage. Who

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knows what I might have been had my guardians protected me from evil until I was old enough to have some sense?"

Then he would sigh and roll up his eyes. "My wife is a saint — charitable, distinguished. My daughters are angels — pious, accomplished. My boys are innocence itself — studious, merry. They live in a different world from mine." He sighed again, and spread out his hands deprecatingly. Often his eyes would fill with tears, then he would rise, adjust his cravat, put a fresh flower in his button-hole, and, setting his hat jauntily on his head, sally out into his own particular world, one doubtless far more congenial to him than that in which his saintly and distinguished consort dwelt. "Never follow my example," he would call out to me as he moved away, waving his hand airily and pointing his toes carefully.

Mr. Arthur was of another mould, and his quiet cynicism repelled me more than the old colonel's frankness. It seemed to cut from under my boyish feet the platform of faith, of idealism, of hero-worship on which they had stood, and to fill me with vague uneasiness. It is true that I was prepared to meet sin and unbelief in the world, but I had expected them to wear a dreadful and repellent aspect. I had not thought to find profligacy and cynicism in a man of family and reputation, of outward refinement and solid business integrity, like Mr. Arthur, or to hear agnosticism and libertinism preached by a worshipper of the beautiful and the ideal, a youth of exquisite taste and culture, like Montgomerie Moir. There was no cloven hoof or diabolical horn visible in Mr. Arthur's blond, thorough-bred person, and, save a slight restlessness of eye and manner, nothing about young Moir's graceful, pict-

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uresque personality to suggest that he was on the high-road to perdition. And the French colonel, though he frankly accused himself of being far advanced on the broad and easy path that leads downward, was, in spite of a certain affectation and flippancy of manner, a kindly, honest man, and a most entertaining companion. All this was very confusing and very upsetting to my preconceived notions of vice and virtue. I worked hard and tried to forget my surroundings and all the puzzling questions they brought up, but there were times when, in an agony of homesickness, I would sigh for my grandfather, whose coming had been delayed by trouble on the farm. I had not him to fly to, but I knew that Dr. Chabert, to whose care he had committed me jointly with Mr. Arthur, was living at Fontainebleau. I had not yet seen him, but I relied on his whole-souled, hearty friendship, and it seemed to me as if the touch of trusty little Étienne's hand on mine would set the world to rights again. With them I could forget — forget the vicious, godless world, the contemptible lives of many of its so-called great men, forget the heartaches and disillusionments that were fast sapping my ambition and courage. Before long I had taken a resolution and had run away for the second time.

Fortunately Mr. Arthur kept me well supplied with pocket-money, and I was independent. I had more than enough to take me to Fontainebleau and return should the Chaberts have left there. I hailed a cab and drove rapidly to the Gare de Lyon.

It was a beautiful summer morning, and every carriage in the train was packed with humanity. With some difficulty I found a seat in a second-class carriage with six other passengers. There was an old lady riding with her back to the engine, while

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her servant rode forward, and who occupied herself with worsted work, although the car shook so that she continually lost count of her stitches. A young woman, who looked like an actress, was absorbed in a novel in four fat volumes, and, having a severe cold in her head, asked to have all the windows closed. Her chaperon devoured sandwiches unceasingly all the way to Fontainebleau. Next to me sat a maiden lady from New England, wearing spectacles and engaged in reading tracts, which she held conspicuously, with their pious titles outside, for the benefit of a sedate young abbé sitting opposite her, as if she felt that the whole support of protestant christianity lay upon her shoulders. Just before the train started a lady entered hastily and looked dismayed at seeing the carriage so full, the only vacant place being one opposite to mine, facing away from the engine. I arose, and, removing my hat, offered her my seat, but she sank into the other, saying in English, "I prefer to ride backward, thanks, as I escape the draught and the cinders."

She was elegantly dressed in the height of fashion, with huge crinoline, beruffled, wide-spreading skirts, and a stylish poke bonnet of immense size framing her pretty face. She removed her mitts, showing a number of handsomely jewelled rings and bracelets. There always seems to me something barbaric in the wearing of so many rings, and I did not feel attracted towards my fashionable neighbor. She entered into subdued conversation with me directly, and, learning that I was a stranger in France and alone, expressed an almost motherly solicitude in my welfare, though this maternal manner somewhat surprised me, as her general appearance seemed to indicate a desire to look youthful.

"I have a dear little boy, six years of age," she

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said, "and before I know it he will be growing up as tall and mature-looking as you. Only seventeen? Indeed, I should have thought you at least twenty-one, but I am glad you are not twenty-one, for then I should have to be very formal with you, while now I may treat you quite as my own boy."

I did not see why my youth should give a strange young woman the right to treat me like a son, but I could not be rude to any one so kind. She asked me many questions about my destination and my guardian, and when I confessed that I did not know his address she eagerly offered to drive me to his hotel.

"But I do not know the name of his hotel," I reminded her.

"I am quite sure that he is in the one that I am stopping at, for I recognize your guardian perfectly by your description," she replied.

A pleasant journey of an hour and a half brought us to Fontainebleau, where my new-found friend asked me to call a cab for her. There were about twenty vehicles of different descriptions standing in front of the little station, and their drivers were all shouting, gesticulating, and waving their hats towards me at once. When I finally signed to one of them, they all seized their reins and drove up furiously, two-horse traps, pony-carriages, barouches, closed flies, and every imaginable conveyance closing in upon me from every side. I chose a neat coupé, much to the disgust of the others, especially the driver of the pony-chaise, who shook his fist at me, while the driver of the barouche called upon all the guards, policemen, porters, and his fellow-coachmen to witness that he had arrived at the platform first. I turned a deaf ear, and handed my new acquaintance into the coupé, where she asked to be driven to the Hôtel de la Ville de Lyon.

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"Let me take you there," she said, beckoning me to sit beside her; so I removed my hat and followed her into the coupé. We drove rapidly through the stone-paved streets of the little town into the courtyard of the hotel where we alighted, while she led the way to a small, daintily furnished boudoir on the second floor. I hesitated.

"You must have a cup of tea with me after the hot, close air on the train," she insisted. "I could not dream of letting you go after all your kindness without showing you that little hospitality. Come, no remonstrances! Your guardian is not expecting you, so there is no hurry."

I did not wish to offend. I blushed and murmured, "I shall be delighted." The tea things were brought in by a maid, and then I was left alone with the mistress, who sat by my side and urged me to partake of the little dainties on the tray. She grew very confidential, even tender in her manner, and it soon seemed as if our relations had been reversed, and I was acting the paternal rôle while she poured out her troubles to my fatherly ear with childlike ingenuousness. She had been married when very young, she said, to an English officer who had treated her brutally. He had been in the Crimea and was now stationed at Halifax. He had left her in poverty, and she had been forced to send her two darling children to his mother to be educated. She had been too young to know her own heart when she married, she sighed, and now she must wear out her youth in poverty and loneliness, deserted by him who should protect her and separated from her darlings.

I glanced at her costly gown, at the beautiful jewels glittering on her fingers, at the many expensive elegancies of the little boudoir. I began to

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recollect some things I had heard from Mr. Arthur; I began to have a dim remembrance of a face I had seen by the side of Montgomerie Moir, in his mail phaeton in the Bois de Boulogne.

She now filled me a fresh cup of tea. As she handed it to me she stood very close to me; then I felt a caressing touch on my hair, and in another instant she had stooped and kissed me on the cheek. "You beautiful boy!" she murmured.

My only feeling was one of unutterable indignation, and a sense that holy memories of Alix had been insulted. I started aside and deliberately allowed the cup of tea I held to upset and spill its contents full over the front of the young woman's pretty frock. She sprang back and shook out the ruffles in dismay, her eyes snapping angrily.

"You careless, awkward booby!" she screamed; "you have ruined my gown!"

"You should not have been standing so near," I retorted, angrily, folding my arms and facing her with flashing eyes.

"Tut! tut!" she said, disdainfully; "I forgot that little boys do not like to be called pretty."

I took my hat and stood erect. "You have driven me in your carriage, I have partaken of your hospitality, and I have ruined your gown; but I will repay you as far as I can, that you may have nothing to regret in this affair." I shook the contents of my purse on the table, much after the manner of old-fashioned heroes of romance. It was all I had. There were nine twenty-franc gold pieces and some loose change in silver.

Her hands clenched, and she muttered something I could not hear. I moved towards the door when suddenly she snatched up a handful of coins from the table and threw them at me with all her might.

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"Take your money," she hissed, "and never let me see your face again."

The coins struck me full in the chest and fell on the floor all about me. I glanced at them and smiled significantly. They were all of silver. The nine gold Napoleons lay untouched upon the little tea-table near her.

She saw my smile, and, turning round, threw herself sobbing on the couch. Suddenly the door from the other room opened, and the maid entered hastily. As I started to pass out into the hall, there was a rap on the outer door. I threw it open, and there stood the coachman who had driven us from the station. He looked into the room apologetically.

"Pardon!" he coughed, discreetly. "I only stepped up to ask the gentleman to be kind enough to write a bit of paper to certify that it was my carriage he chose an hour ago. The drivers of the barouche and the pony-chaise each declare that he signed to them first, and that I came by my fare unjustly. Just a word, sir, to save me from trouble at the stand."

He looked so piteous that I wrote out the desired certificate, but without signing my name. The maid who had glanced over my shoulder suggested, deprecatingly:

"But the gentleman should sign his name. It will be of no use without a signature."

"If you please," said the driver, beseechingly. For a moment I thought of signing a false name, but I considered that if discovered it would give matters a bad look. All the world might know what I had done that morning, and I boldly signed the name my grandfather wished me to bear in France, and the date, "Éric de Macarty, July 12, 1857." Then I stepped out into the hall without further

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words, leaving the three together, and went rapidly down the staircase and into the street.

I inquired at every hotel in the town for Dr. Chabert, but without result. The hot noon hours wore away, and I sought refuge in the stately forest, and stretched myself to rest and think over the situation under a spreading oak-tree. I could hear the horns of gay hunting-parties through the woods, and caught an occasional glimpse of the pink coats of the gentlemen and the plumed hats of the ladies as they swept by through the grassy forest bridle-paths. Oh, what would I not give to be back in the shady forests of Belle Isle, living in the past, and seeing in imagination the canoes of explorer, missionary, and *coureur de bois* passing up and down the broad Detroit! Theirs were lives worth leading, lives of high purpose, sincere faith, dauntless energy, and thrilling adventure. Who would not live with them rather than amid the artificialities, the trivialities, the indifference, the shameful sins of an unbelieving world?

In the cool of the evening I wandered back into the town. It was nearly dark, and I was feeling very tired and hungry, when I suddenly caught sight of Dr. Chabert's fine, open countenance and big, burly frame. With a shout of delight I sprang at him and flung my arms round him.

"My God, Éric Frémont!" he exclaimed. "What does this mean?"

"It means that I don't like Mr. Arthur, that I have run away from him, that I want to stay with you, and that I haven't a cent in my pocket and am as hungry as a wolf."

CHAPTER VIII

I HAD a glorious welcome, as I knew I should have. Étienne greeted me with enthusiasm and danced all about me, clapping her hands and laughing gleefully. The boys, Rémy and Frank, fine fellows of eighteen and fourteen, were delighted to have an old companion in mischief turn up, and Mrs. Chabert, though I liked her the least of any in the family, was certainly not lacking in cordiality. It was the first time we had all met together since Alix's death, and there was, of course, a sense of desolation, of a vacant place that never could be filled, but we did not allude to her openly, and I was too glad to be again in this dear home atmosphere to yield to sadness. Of late the air I breathed had been tainted with cynicism and unbelief, and I had felt a certain sense of contamination, even though not yielding to these influences. But the healthy air of home sanctity and affection blew away the murky vapors. I breathed it in greedily, strengthened and uplifted by the sweet tonic.

How Mr. Arthur and the doctor smoothed over the matter of their rival guardianships I know not, but I continued to make my home with the Chaberts through the summer. Whenever I met Mr. Arthur, he was all suavity and condescension, and I was made to feel that much was forgiven me on account of my poor bringing-up. But with Montgomerie Moir it was different. He had formerly been friendly

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and kind to me, with the kindness of a mature young man of twenty-four for an unformed lad of seventeen. The change in him was now startling, for he either shunned me or treated me with marked scorn and frigid contempt. I became uneasy as I realized how completely my character was at the mercy of an offended, unprincipled woman. There was no saying what color she might have given to our meeting, nor in how despicable a light she might have placed me, while the paper I had signed gave witness to my identity. I resolved to confide my misgivings to the good doctor, and after some preliminary hesitation I at length launched into the story of my adventure with the Englishwoman. I had been tortured lately with the fear of having perhaps misjudged a kindly, well-meaning person, of having acted in a cowardly, unchivalrous way towards one truly worthy of my consideration. To my relief, when I reached the tea episode and the ruined gown, the burly doctor burst into a hearty laugh, dug his fist into my ribs, and laughed again till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Served her right, Rodéric, my boy," he roared. "Served her just right! Oh, Lord, why wasn't I there to see?"

"And there is something else," I stammered. "I have reason to think that she is acquainted with Mr. Moir, and that she may have—"

"She has," interrupted the doctor, composedly.

"And they have told you stories against me, and yet you have kept me in your family without asking me a single question?"

He turned round and faced me squarely, his mouth twitching a little. "Éric Frémont, haven't I summered you and wintered you for thirteen years, ever since you were brought up from Cuba, a pale, wea-

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zened little atom in buff pelisses? I knew you would tell me about this affair sooner or later, and in the mean time I would as soon have suspected my Étienne of evil as you. But, I say, it isn't good for any boy to stop too long in bad company. Mr. Arthur may look after your property well where I should probably make ducks and drakes of it in short order, but, when it comes to morals, between you and me you are safer with us than with my honored co-trustee and his precious nephew."

"But suppose that they should have written to my grandfather!"

"I don't suppose it, I know they have, and that they have given you a good coat of black paint. You are an underhand scoundrel, a hypocrite of the deepest dye, a youthful adept in crime masquerading in the guise of a milksop and prig, at seventeen trifling with the affections of an innocent married woman and enticing her away from her happy home! Oh, fie! Oh, fie!"

If I had any anxiety about my grandfather's reception of this flattering characterization it was soon put to rest by the following communication from him:

"MY DEAR BOY,—I enclose an order for \$100.00 for pocket money, fearing your skinflint of a trustee may keep you too close. Draw on me for all you want, for you will never make your old grandfather sigh nor your angel mother blush for the way you will use it. I can't join you till Christmas, for I've dismissed Morisseau. It's wonderful how many more eggs the hens lay, and how many more quarts of milk the cows give, since his departure. I believe I shall die a rich man, after all, but I shall die soon, for I have a plethora of *crêpes* and *croquecignolles*, which old Kate gives me every day because Monsieur Éric liked them. Every tree on the old spot is sighing for you, my lad, and every little wavelet on the river rises and falls to the tune of 'Rodéric, Rodéric!' A happy day it will be when you come home to the old place and to the heart of your old Pépé.

"RODÉRIC-EUGÈNE DE MACARTY."

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And so I dismissed the adventure from my mind, little dreaming how it would exert its baneful influence upon my future life.

With the autumn came my return to Paris to take up my studies at the École des Ponts et Chaussées, but this time under happier auspices, for, while awaiting my grandfather's arrival, I shared quarters with Rémy Chabert. He was a year older than I, knew Paris well, and was preparing to study medicine. The French lads to whom he introduced me were fine young fellows, trained in the best homes, eager students, and enthusiastic adherents of the young Liberal Catholic party under the leadership of Ozanam, Montalembert, and the Dominican Lacordaire — a very different set from the cynical, disillusionized, world-weary youths whom I had met at the cafés and clubs patronized by Mr. Arthur and Montgomerie Moir. My new surroundings were congenial and stimulating. The very air we breathed inspired devotion and sacrifice and carried me back to the atmosphere of boyish ideals and enthusiasms, for no country in the world has given so generously of its wealth and the lives of its children to the things of God as France. From my childhood a halo of romance and heroism had crowned the picturesque figure of French monk and missionary in the history of the exploration of the Great Lakes. The fascinating volumes of Montalembert's *Monks of the West* came to add an earlier chapter to the glorious pages of devotion and martyrdom, and had led many a generous young heart in France to the consecration of the cloister, or sent it forth to a martyr's reward in China or Africa.

After having rubbed against the world of unbelief and materialism for a few months, the religious ideals of my childhood became a very rock of refuge. The ardor, the enthusiasm, of my present companions

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fostered my new-born piety, and it was while in this mood that I passed one day by a somewhat gloomy portal in the Rue de Vaugirard. It was surmounted by a cross, and I took it to be the entrance to a church or convent, and entered in hesitatingly. It proved to be the outer chapel of the friars of the Dominican order. It was well filled with a congregation from the outside world, and as I took my place at a *prie-dieu* near the door I glanced around me.

Near by knelt a lady that might have been the colonel's "charitable and distinguished" wife, with two school-boys that might have been his "innocent and studious" sons. A little farther off, accompanied by their governess, knelt two young girls that might have been his "virtuous and accomplished" daughters. There were others, also, men and women, and these were they who, as the colonel had said, lived in a different world from his.

For there was, as I now knew, a different world, even here in Paris—a world that believed in faith and morality, that worshipped God in this life and hoped for heaven hereafter.

Soon I realized that some one was preaching, that in the pulpit stood a priest, tall, ascetic, clad in the white habit of the Friars Preachers, who was finishing an exquisite peroration on the fitness and beauty of personal holiness in words from the divine Revelation to the beloved Apostle John. I sank back in my chair, closed my eyes, while my ears drank in hungrily the consoling words of unearthly joy:

"What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that

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sitteth on His throne shall dwell among them. The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. These are they which are not defiled with women, for they are virgins, which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God. These were redeemed from among men, the first fruits unto God and the Lamb. For he that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My Son!"

I opened my eyes and looked before me. In the foreground were the kneeling figures of worshippers from the world outside. Divided from the main body of the chapel by the high, carved rood-screen was the long, narrow choir, with the altar in its midst, and in its shadow knelt rows of white-robed, youthful figures, the Dominican novices of the great order of Friars Preachers, youths from sixteen years of age up to maturer manhood, young men who, in the heyday of life, had turned away not from its sinful pleasures only, but also from humanity's most sacred joys, to consecrate their youthful ardor to the Lamb without spot. The innocence and fervor of their devoted lives radiated from clear brows and modest eyes. These were the chivalry of God, the flowers of the Church Militant, the glorious young knighthood of heaven, without fear and without reproach!

And I beheld their faces as they had been the faces of the elect!

CHAPTER IX

FROM the hour of this visit at the Dominican chapel in the Rue de Vaugirard the seed of desire for the monastic life, already sown in my heart, took root there and grew rapidly, choking out the weeds of worldly ambitions. I would have knocked at once for admission at the convent gates and begged that its doors might close on me forever but for one thought which restrained me and kept me in misery, for I knew not whether to consider it a natural weakness, holding me back from God, unworthy of one who had put his hand to the plough, or whether it was the voice of Duty bidding me to stay in the world. When I thought of my grandfather, of him who had been father, mother, all in all to me, and to whom I owed everything, then I felt irresolute and unhappy. How could I leave him desolate in his old age? Did not every sentiment of duty, affection, and gratitude bind me to him? Did not God himself place duty towards our parents as the first of all our human obligations? Yet on the other hand He had said: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. Leave all things and follow Me. He that leaveth father or mother or lands for My sake, shall receive an hundredfold in this world and the world to come."

Eager, uncertain, troubled, I took refuge in the thought of making a spiritual retreat with the Dominican friars, of spending the customary eight

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days in prayer and consultation with them. By their decision I would abide, after laying everything before them as honestly as I knew how.

The announcement of my plan was met by those nearest me with a storm of disapproval variously expressed.

"Rory Macarty a monk!" jeered the Chabert boys. "Are you very ill, my dear? Let us feel your pulse. Bleed him a little and he'll get over it."

"Why, Éric!" exclaimed Étienne, with tearful, reproachful eyes. "What shall I do? I expect to marry you when I grow up, and if you turn monk what will become of me?"

"You need not speak of eight days, as if you could ever get away from there," said Mrs. Chabert, snappishly. "Those monks will never let you go if you once get inside their gates. A talented young man with an independent fortune is too good a prize to lose. Take my advice and don't go near them. The world really needs fine young men like you. It would be a sin to bury yourself in a convent. Just think how much good you could do in the world, and what good use you could make of your money and talents!"

"Rodéric," said the doctor, seriously and affectionately, taking me aside and laying both hands on my shoulders, "have you thought about your grandfather, my lad? It will break his heart. He will not try to keep you back—he is an Irishman to the core and they are always proud to give a son to God. He will make the sacrifice, and then—he will die—for his is no ordinary affection. Few parents love as he loves you, and he is growing old and feeble. God knows I respect the priesthood and reverence the religious life, but I cannot think you are called to leave your only parent."

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"You need not be afraid of his remaining," sneered Mr. Arthur. "I know monks, and know that they always have an eye for profit. They will not care to keep Éric when I tell them how seriously impaired his financial prospects are, that he will not be of age for four years, and that not a cent of dowry will they get from me as trustee in the meantime."

"I hope you will all come to see the fathers while I am making the retreat," I rejoined, "and tell them frankly what you think. I ask nothing better than to have them fully informed of every side of the question."

I was filled with joyous anticipation when the convent door was opened to me. Its bare walls seemed to me like a glimpse of Paradise; the manly, white-robed forms that moved about within them were to me as the angels and archangels of God, the boyish figures of the novices were as the ministering spirits before the throne. They were human and pleasant enough, with strong, sensible faces, frank, open manners, and kindly smiles, but the thought of their consecrated hearts, their lives united through different avocations into one service of God and the Lamb, seemed to lend them a touch of supernatural grace and bind them together in the bonds of a charity all divine. I was conducted to the small, whitewashed cell that was to be mine during the eight days of my retreat, and when I found myself alone a flood of joy came over me. I glanced fearlessly at the bare walls, the hard couch and chair, the board floor. I was undaunted by poverty and penance.

As the days passed by my happiness did not lessen, though it changed in character. It was instinctive, unreasoning, at first, like the happiness of a healthy child on being turned loose into a field of flowers. Later it was less emotional, but the solid, reasonable,

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unshakable joy of a man who has possessed himself of a treasure and finds it even beyond his dreams. As the rule of the Dominican order was explained to me, as the religious life unfolded itself practically before me, I was more and more satisfied. I loved it all: the midnight chanting of the divine office, the austere life with its penitential practices, its long months of abstinence from meat, its many seasons of strict fast, the humility and obedience of the novitiate, the ten long years devoted to study of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, of theology and canon law, of philosophy and science, of letters and oratory, and all the arduous preparation for the life of preacher and missionary. When my limbs ached with contact from the hard couch, I murmured not. When I, the lazy, sleepy Éric Frémont, was roused from my first slumbers to join the choir in singing the praises of God during those midnight hours when the world was wrapped in forgetfulness, I responded gladly. My heart was overflowing with love for God and man. It was not hard to love man under these surroundings, for those about me were choice spirits, intellectually and morally, manhood ennobled by lofty aims, pure living, and disinterested labor for the elevation and sanctification of their fellows. The monks were manly, kindly, genial, and it was no credit to me that I was happy in their midst, but I verily believe that had I found them churlish and crabbed I could still have served them with humility and gladness in those fervent days.

But in the midst of my joy there was one thought that wrung my heart with misery—my grandfather! I had endeavored to be perfectly honest with my superiors, to lay all the circumstances of the case before them plainly, hoping to be guided by their advice. But with great delicacy they refused to force my judg-

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ment in any way, and I was utterly unable to come to any decision myself. It looked as if the suspense was going to continue indefinitely, when they suggested that the matter might be laid before the Father Provincial, who was to be in Paris for a few days.

The Father Provincial! Père Lacordaire! How my heart bounded at his name! Lacordaire, the impassioned orator, the most eloquent preacher since the days of Bossuet! Lacordaire, the idol of the Catholic youth of France, the Apostle of Liberty, the valiant soldier of the Cross, the hero of every generous heart! No wonder I was overcome at the thought of meeting him, of having my fate laid in his hands.

I did not see him the night of his arrival, but in the morning he sent for me, and I found myself standing in the presence of the great Lacordaire with a tranquil heart and a great confidence that I should hear from his lips that which was to be my vocation in life. I had no fear or embarrassment. I knelt before the stately figure, and asked his blessing; then I stood up and looked into his noble face and luminous eyes as one would look into the face of trusted friend and sympathetic father.

I remembered afterwards how very simple he was, how quietly and naturally he talked to me of my affairs, as if we had been friends for years and everything was understood between us. There was no trace of the eloquence, the magnetism, the power that thrilled the hearts of multitudes. He spoke with great decision, simplicity, and even affectionateness, if I may say so, but from the first glance that he gave me out of those deep, glowing eyes I would have died for him had he bid me.

He lost no time asking me questions, but began at once.

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"I will tell you straightforwardly my views with regard to your position. Your leaving the world and your grandfather cannot, it seems to me, be seriously thought of. Your duty lies there!"

He paused a moment. I bowed before his decision, but my heart was heavy. It was as if he had shut the gates of heaven against me! I could not speak a word.

"Poor boy!" he said, gently. "I understand! Many think that in renouncing the world and entering the cloister they are making a sacrifice; but with you it is the other way, the sacrifice lies in renouncing the convent to re-enter the world. Is it not so?"

For a moment I could not control my voice. Then I stammered, "But I am glad not to make my grandfather suffer."

"Yes, yes," he replied; "you owe him a duty as your only parent, you owe him a debt as the protector of your infancy. These are sacred bonds. God gave to all men the commandment, 'Honor thy father,' but only to a chosen few the counsel, 'Leave thy father and follow Me.' He asks of all, as He did of the rich young man in the Gospel who sought perfection, that, as a fundamental requirement, they fulfil the commandments first. The counsels come later. You may not now see God's object in keeping you in the world, but you cannot fail to recognize in the duties of your position a mark of His will to which you must submit. It seems to me clear that you should seize the advantages offered you in the way of study, and devote yourself to the profession for which you are fitted, without further anxiety. Providence has put in the way of your pious dreams the obstacle of a plain duty—the support and consolation of your only remaining parent.

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Have no trouble about the future, my child. Do your daily work, bear each day's burden, and believe that you will always find the will of your Lord good and lovable when you get at the secret of life."

"But there seems to be so little that I can do for God in the world," I said, hesitatingly. "I am not rebelling against your decision, father, but I want to serve Him in some special way."

"So *little*?" he repeated, with a peculiar smile. "Do you, then, think yourself capable of something great?"

I hung my head in confusion, but he instantly resumed his kind, friendly tone.

"Indeed, my child, it is very likely that you may be called upon for a little heroism. Begin with the duties of your state of life, your loving ministrations to your grandparent, the work of your profession, which is your personal accomplishment of that sentence passed by God upon our first father, 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread.' Then come the duties of citizenship. You cannot, as the citizen of a great Democracy, be indifferent to its various public vicissitudes, and you may be called upon to act in the full measure of your strength. No country can live without an educated class, especially when that educated class is the only nobility which exists within it; but an education which ignores the things of God cannot regenerate the State. Prepare yourself assiduously to be worthy of this highest citizenship, and if no beautiful day is to dawn on your country, at least the day of God will dawn upon your own soul."

I had never thought much about the United States as my country. With so many strains of foreign blood, with my foreign birth making me an alien in the land, I had given but a half-hearted allegiance

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to the country of my adoption ; but now I inwardly resolved to be a loyal, zealous American citizen from that moment, and to be naturalized immediately on my return.

"As aids to perseverance," he continued, "the first thing is to choose a spiritual adviser and friend who will help you keep to the right path. The next is to have the society of young men of your own age. Do not be with souls inferior to your own but choose such company as your heart must want. You will find many here in Paris worthy of your highest aspirations. With these safeguards you will issue faithful and good from the dangers about you. God will bless and help you, my child, and the memory of this retreat and the sacrifice it asked of you will benefit your whole life."

I then started to withdraw, well knowing how pressed he was with weightier affairs than mine. But he stepped after me, and, laying his hands on my shoulders, said impressively, as if his keen, soul-searching eyes saw in futurity some destiny hovering over me:

"Never forget, my child, that you are the follower of Him who died for His enemies."

And in many troublous hours the recollection of these words, inspired by his prophetic vision, glowed in my memory, and was to me as a beacon-light amid the tempests of the soul.

CHAPTER X

FOUR years later I had finished my course of instruction at the École des Ponts et Chaussées, and was a full-fledged civil engineer, ready to seek fame and fortune in the land of my adoption. My grandfather had joined me in Paris early in the course of my studies, and had remained with me for nearly two years, but I could see that he was not happy there. The truth is that for sixty years the old Chevalier had dreamed of the France of his father and grandfather, the France of Marie Antoinette and Versailles. He remembered its glories as a child. He had fled when still a boy from the persecutions of the Reign of Terror, and he had no sympathy with the republics or with the Napoleonic dynasty. The Duke of Bordeaux was his king, whom he saluted as "Henri V.," while the Second Empire, with all its pomp and glitter, was a source of constant irritation to his loyal spirit. The ruthless destruction of historic landmarks which characterized the administration of Baron Haussmann as Prefect of the Seine was nothing less than sacrilegious in his eyes, and he prophesied a terrible retribution to the empire for its unholy desecrations. That the sanitation of the city was vastly improved, that it was growing daily in beauty and magnificence, was no compensation. His only pleasure was to meet the old Legitimist aristocrats at their club, to grumble with them over the degeneracy of the

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age, and to drink the health of Henri V. standing. At the end of the second year he received with resignation a suggestion from his agent in Detroit that the farm at Hamtramck needed his personal supervision.

For the remaining two years of my stay in Paris I shared bachelor quarters with Rémy Chabert and two French lads from the provinces, students at the University of Paris. We were merry and congenial in our tastes, and in vacation-time we tramped gayly, student-wise, through Switzerland and the Black Forest, the Pyrenees and the Low Countries, with our knapsacks on our shoulders, sticks and guide-books in hand, singing and making merry wherever we went, as only youth, and innocent youth at that, knows how to do. I had renounced completely and forever all idea of entering a religious order, and threw myself eagerly into not only my professional work and ambitions, but also into the amusements and interests of youth.

The last days of my last vacation brought us to Lucerne, where Dr. and Mrs. Chabert, Frank and Étienne were established at a *pension* on one of the hills overlooking the town. During the four years of my stay in Paris I had ever been received with open-hearted affection as a son and brother in their family, and I had grown more and more attached to them and their interests. Mrs. Chabert I had never fancied. She never seemed to me wholly worthy of her noble husband or her fine, gifted children. She appeared to have no thought but for Étienne and her worldly advancement. Étienne was the most brilliant and promising of her children. She excelled in every study that she took up. She talked fluently in five languages, each with the accent and gesture of a native. She danced with

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inimitable grace; she was a prodigy at the piano, gifted with a marked sense of rhythm, an unfailing memory, and strong, supple fingers. Her young voice was full of rare promise, and her understanding far beyond her years. She had much girlish beauty also—her eyes were large and intensely black, her cheeks rosy, her chestnut hair thick and curly, her small nose straight and delicately cut, her teeth regular and brilliantly white, her mouth a fascinating little Cupid's bow. On all these personal advantages her foolish mother had expatiated in her presence a dozen times a day, till the girl had become painfully vain and self-conscious. Mrs. Chabert's one thought was to give Nita every mental and physical advantage that Paris could afford—the most celebrated masters, the most accomplished governess, the most picturesque clothes, the most desirable young friends. Of the girl's spiritual nature she thought no more than a pagan, perhaps not as much, for I never heard an appeal to any higher motive than a desire to appear well in the eyes of the world. The doctor, fortunately for his children, was of finer fibre and deeper faith than his wife.

Vain, conceited, stuffed full of worldly notions and silly dreams, yet Étienne had many noble natural qualities. She was fearlessly honest, she was stanch and loyal in her friendships, she could be generous and self-sacrificing towards those she loved, she was always refined and modest in word and bearing. For these things I revered her in my heart and had absolute trust in her, but her faults often angered me, and she could never, never fill in my heart the place of her idolized, idealized, and loyally remembered sister, my first and, as I told myself, my last and only love.

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We found Nita in all the glory of her first long skirts and sweeping burnous, her hair rolled off her face and coiled in braids at the back of her head. She was now nearly sixteen, and was to be introduced at court the following season.

"Between you and me, Rodéric, it is all wrong, but the women will have it," grumbled the doctor. "She ought to be kept at dolls for three years yet; but what is a poor, helpless man to do, even though he be a father and a physician? I had my way about her going to a convent-school last winter, but it seems I must give in to everything else."

With all her new dignity Miss Nita was not too fine to loop up her long gown over a short, linsey-woolsey Balmoral skirt, don one of the red flannel Garibaldi shirts that were all the vogue with the young people on account of the Austro-Italian war, and tramp through the woods and over the hills or row on the lake with her "three brothers." I was quite content to be her brother, for I still thought that the love of my life was buried with Alix deep under the waters of the blue Detroit, though I doubt if a brother's pulses beat as happily as mine did in the companionship of a spoiled young sister.

A ball was to be given at one of the fashionable hotels, and Étienne was all agog to go. At first her mother demurred, fearing the assemblage might not be sufficiently select; but finding that it was under the patronage of an English duchess and a Russian princess, and that the number of invitations was strictly limited, she gave her consent. Mrs. Chabert was of the Bretagne family, of Quebec, and there was a tradition that this family traced its descent from the ancient dukes of Brittany. This tradition Mrs. Chabert had found convenient to revive during her residence in France, and her visiting-

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cards, which at first had read "Chabert, *née* Bretagne," were now boldly engraved "Chabert *de* Bretagne," and to my astonishment I heard Étienne being introduced as "Mademoiselle de Bretagne." The doctor saw my surprise and poked me jocosely in the ribs.

"Rodéric," he whispered, "my family has its traditions as well as my wife's. It is well proved that the Chaberts are descended from Noah. 'Dr. Chabert de Noé, Prince de l'Ararat,' would look well on a card, eh? The dukes of Brittany couldn't do better than that, eh?"

Madame Chabert de Bretagne fulfilled her arduous duties as chaperon by dancing as gayly as her daughter, while the "Prince of Ararat" joined some English acquaintances of mature years at a rubber of whist in the card-rooms. I did not dance much myself, but was content to lean against a pillar of the ballroom and watch Nita's triumphs. How pretty and happy, and how good she looked, and how eagerly she was sought after by the youths of all nationalities gathered there! Her past year of convent training had softened the self-conscious look that had marred the beauty of her childhood, and she was simply bewitching in the sweet, modest air of pleased surprise with which she accepted the compliments and attentions showered upon her. How merrily she laughed, how daintily she danced, how incessantly she chatted in one language after another, French or Italian, German, English, or Spanish, all were alike easy to her!

Nothing happened to spoil her pleasure till after the supper, when I could see that she was annoyed by the too assiduous devotion of a half-tipsy young German sprig of nobility. I immediately crossed the ballroom and offered her my arm, saying, with a

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bow of apology towards her partner: "Your mother has sent me to conduct you to her. She has met some old friends to whom she wishes to introduce you."

She moved off with me gladly enough.

"Éric, you are an angel," she whispered. "How good of you to rescue me from that odious creature! What do you think? He has not known me fifteen minutes, and he already declares that existence has no charms except at my side!"

"He is drunk," I said, dryly—"drunk as a loon—or he couldn't think such a thing."

"You ungallant creature!" she pouted, withdrawing her hand from my arm. "I shall have to punish you by refusing you the dance you were about to ask me for."

"Take my arm again instantly!" I exclaimed, with an assumption of great sternness. "Don't you know that a young woman must take her escort's arm or people will think he is ashamed of her? Now, however much I may be ashamed of you, I am a self-respecting young man, and I wish the world to think well of you for my sake. Therefore, I will dance with you, especially as I see your mother is waltzing and cannot introduce you to those friends of hers just now."

"So sorry!" she murmured; "but they will do for another emergency."

I enjoyed my waltz perhaps somewhat more than brothers usually enjoy dancing with their sisters, although I was perfectly prepared, after I had surrendered her to her mother's care at the end of the dance, to be taken aside by a Swiss youth, who presented the card of the young German sprig of nobility and demanded that I should either apologize immediately for robbing him of his partner or else

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meet him in a certain field on the road to Brunnen at six o'clock the following morning.

"I shall be there punctually," I said, handing my card to the second, "unless, indeed, your principal will come to his senses and apologize to the young lady and her family for thrusting his attentions upon her when he was in no condition for polite society."

I sought one of my French student friends, who consented to act as my second and to make the necessary arrangements. Before retiring that night I took down my foils and asked Rémy to try a turn with me, saying that I needed exercise after the heavy supper and close air of the ball. He suspected nothing and expressed no surprise, for fencing was our usual daily exercise. I slept soundly enough that night. The prospect of a duel did not bother me much. Nobody fought life-and-death combats nowadays; they only stood up and fenced awhile till one or the other was either scratched or disarmed. I knew very well that the Church condemned duelling, but, boylike without consulting a theologian, I took it carelessly for granted that the condemnation referred only to combats *à l'outrance*, and not to the conventional fencing-bouts of Continental students. It was only in the Southern and Southwestern States of America that it was still the fashion for gentlemen to shoot the life out of each other. In Europe the average duel was not worth losing sleep about, nor as dangerous as an ordinary boxing-match in an English public school.

At the first gray light of dawn I was up and dressing stealthily. Rémy's bed was close to the door, which I remembered squeaked infernally; therefore, my best way was to get out of the window and drop from the roof of the veranda on to the terrace below.

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I was crawling over the roof, shoes in hand, when a window opened hastily and a head was thrust out—Étienne's head, with the curls falling round it as they used to when she was a little child.

"Éric Frémont! What under the sun—I thought you were a burglar!"

"Don't hide, my dear! I am just as well worth looking at as a burglar, and you are too sweet for anything, with your curls tumbling down like old times."

"But why are you climbing over respectable roofs at this hour of the morning, I should like to know?"

"Hush! Don't betray me! I am going to take an early dip in the lake."

"You!" she exclaimed, contemptuously—"you sacrifice two good hours of sleep for a dip in the lake! I know you too well for that! You can't deceive me, Éric Frémont; you are bent on some mischief!"

"I know you are disappointed," I grumbled. "You wish I were doing something romantic—fighting a duel for you, or something of that sort. I am more likely to die in the gutter here. I'm very fond of you, Nita, but I haven't your fancy for adventures, and I do care a great deal for my good name. Do you realize that you are jeopardizing my reputation by keeping me here in this position? Just think of the scandal in the *pension* if a pair of wakeful eyes should happen to glance out and see me at your window."

But I had no further need of artifice. With a little squeal of dismay she sprang back and closed the blind, while, chuckling at my success, I quickly slid off the roof, slipped on my shoes, and ran lightly down the hill in the freshness of a summer's dawn. I found myself humming and whistling as gayly in the sweet air as if I were going to meet my lady love instead of an angry rival. It was an old French-Canadian love-song that came into my head, and it

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struck me as irresistibly funny that I, Éric Frémont, should be singing love-songs and fighting duels for little Étienette Chabert, little black-eyed Étienette, that used to sit on my knee and make me tell her stories. "À la Claire Fontaine," I sang :

"À la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener ;
C'est au pied d'un chêne
Que je m'suis reposé.
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*

"C'est au pied d'un chêne,
Que je m'suis reposé ;
Sur la plus haute branche
Le rossignol chantait.
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*

"Sur la plus haute branche
Le rossignol chantait ;
Chante, rossignol, chante,
Toi qui à le cœur gai !
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*"*

* By the crystal spring
I wandered wearily ;
Under an oak-tree's shade
I lay me down to rest.
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

Under an oak-tree's shade
I laid me down to rest ;
While from the topmost branch
Sang the nightingale.
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

And from the topmost branch
Sang the nightingale ;
O nightingale, sing on,
Your heart is light and gay !
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

CHAPTER XI

A WALK of twenty minutes on the Brunnen road brought me to the field at the same moment with my opponent and the seconds. I thought that with restored sobriety the young baron would probably take a sensible view of his last night's misconduct and be ready to apologize, but it soon became apparent that he meant fight. I had always looked upon fencing simply as a manly, graceful contest of skill, and had never exercised myself in it with any view to duelling or self-defence, and now I began to wonder how I should come out in this thing. My antagonist was shorter than I, but thick-set and muscular, while his face was marked by sundry scars which proved his Heidelberg training, and that he was no new hand at this sort of encounter. I was nervously anxious to begin, that I might know the worst I had to fear. There was some difficulty between the seconds in settling the preliminaries, as they were of different nationalities and customs; but at length I was informed that the first one to be disarmed was to apologize to the other. We were given the signal, and I stood somewhat cautiously on the defensive. I soon found that we had been schooled in far different methods and were slow to understand each other's play. My opponent relied on his strength and endurance, and seemed anxious to draw blood, but was not quick in his movements. I was more agile, more skilled in certain

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nicer tactics of the art, but was neither so strong nor so determined as he, and it seemed to me best to act on the defensive until he was off his guard and then disarm him with a sudden movement. It was a strange thing to find myself fighting a duel, and I felt like one in a dream; yet in a certain way my brain was wonderfully clear, and all the fine points that I had ever practised seemed to return to me with great distinctness. I made one foolish little slip, however, by which the German's foil was able to scratch my cheek, but almost in the same breath I got in a clever twist that sent it spinning out of his hand. I drew a sigh of relief, for I had obtained the victory much more easily than I expected, and I registered a mental vow that henceforth Nita's own brothers might do all the fighting there was to be done, that the Church was quite right in condemning duels, and that nothing should ever drag me into another as long as I lived.

There seemed to be some sharp disagreement between the seconds, and at last de Morog came up and explained the matter to me as the surgeon was washing my cheek.

"They claim that I did not understand their imperfect French—that what they said was 'disabled,' not 'disarmed,'" he said. "However, Woellwart is satisfied to have drawn blood, and is willing to compromise. If you will acknowledge him as victor in the duel, he will write an apology to the young lady's parents for his condition last evening."

I lost my temper then. "Tell him I demand an unconditional apology, no 'ifs' or 'ands' about it! If there has been any misunderstanding, I am perfectly ready to continue the fight on his own terms."

"Till one or the other is disabled?"

"Till one or the other is disabled!"

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The short rest had done me good ; I had acquired confidence in myself, for I saw that, though my antagonist was strong and tireless, he was slow as compared to me, and that if I took the offensive and pressed him with great vigor and agility it would give me a decided advantage, provided I could keep it up long enough. My spirit was thoroughly roused, my change of tactics took him completely by surprise, and he was at his heavy wits' end to defend himself. Yet when I could twice have wounded him I let the chance go, for it seemed a nasty thing to do to bury one's sword in human flesh for no sufficient reason. Of course it was tiring myself to no purpose to fight in this way, and the advantage would soon have been on the side of his superior strength and endurance if his hand had not suddenly fallen by his side, and, with a groan of pain, he dropped his sword, while I had much ado to hold back from running him through. The seconds called a halt. He had wrenched his right shoulder, and his sword-arm was practically useless.

"We still have our left hands, gentlemen," I said, loftily, transferring my sword to the other side. "I am at Baron Woellwart's service, if he wishes to continue."

"The baron cannot fence with his left hand," was the answer.

Neither could I, but wild horses would not have dragged the admission from me. I looked politely surprised, and gave a little shrug of regret, while the seconds declared the fight over, pronounced my opponent fairly disabled, and a note of apology due from him to the young lady's parents. The cut on my cheek was a slight affair, which a couple of stitches and a bit of plaster served to put to rights, and after we had shaken hands rather sullenly, and

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an utter stranger. It is just because I cannot bear to think that anybody—*anybody*—even the most insignificant person, should risk his life for me.”

“But you were ready to risk your life for me once,” I said.

She looked up quickly through her tears. “So this was the way you took to pay off an old score!” she exclaimed.

“Do you think I like duels, or that I go into them for fun?” I asked, in high ill-humor. “I can tell you they are no joke, and I don’t intend to fight again for a snip of a girl who does not care any more for me than for the most insignificant stranger. You can find somebody else to do your duelling hereafter.”

I retired to my room in a huff. I think she tried to call after me, but I did not stop to listen. I was thankful to Providence that I had no sister of my own, if other fellows’ sisters were so contrary and unreasonable.

My temper underwent no improvement all day. I avoided Nita as much as possible. When we were obliged to be together I neglected her, and talked with forced gayety to the others. In the evening the young people danced in the lower hall of the *pension*, but I turned my back on them and wandered up to my room. As I sat at the window, gazing at the moon in melancholy mood, I heard a sweet voice singing an old French chanson at a neighboring window:

“Voici la saison qui doit arriver,
Que tous les amants vont à l’assemblée.
Vole, mon coeur, vole, la lune est levée!
Vole, mon coeur, vole, la lune s’en va!
Le mien n’y est pas, j’en suis assurée,
Il n’est pas dans la danse, je ne sais où il est;
Vole, mon coeur, vole, la lune est levée!
Vole, mon coeur, vole, la lune s’en va!

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“Que donneriez-vous qui l'amènerait ici?
Je donnerai Québec, Sorel, et Saint-Denis,
Et la belle fontaine de mon jardin joli!
Vole, mon cœur, vole, la lune est levée!
Vole, mon cœur, vole, la lune s'en va!”*

The sweet voice ceased singing, but I made no sound. Then it called softly and hesitatingly, “Éric!”

I made no reply.

“Éric!” it called, “are we good friends again?”

Brute that I was, I made no answer, but sat there in obstinate silence. Then came a little sound like a sigh, or a stifled sob. My heart was not proof against that, and in a moment I had thrust my head out.

“Étienne!” I called—“Étienne!”

But I was too late. She had closed her window.

* The time is come when all the lovers
Meet together at the ball.

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is risen!

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is waning!

My lover is not there, of that I am sure,
He has gone from the dance, I know not where!

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is risen!

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is waning!

“What would you give to have him brought back?”
Quebec I would give, and Sorel, and St. Denis,
And the beautiful fount in my pretty garden!

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is risen!

Fly, my heart, fly, the moon is waning!

CHAPTER XII

IN the spring of 1861, after making the tour of Europe — not in the usual tourist's route, but wandering from the beaten track to visit the great engineering works of modern civilization, from the Eddystone Light-house to the gigantic enterprise recently projected and now well under way, the Suez Canal—I sailed for New York, where, having attained my majority, I was to meet my grandfather and Mr. Arthur and enter into possession of my fortune, or what remained of it. The Chevalier met me at the Cunard wharf, and right proud was I to introduce "my grandfather" to some of my fellow-passengers and see the admiration with which they glanced at his tall, erect figure, spare and soldierly, his stately bearing, his clear-cut, aquiline features and keen eyes, his aureole of silvery hair softening the somewhat stern outlines of his countenance. Not a day over sixty did he look, and none would have believed that he bore on his square shoulders the weight of seventy-seven years.

"Nearly seventy-eight, Rodéric," he corrected. "I was born in 1783, the year that this country achieved her independence, and the same month that the treaty of peace with Great Britain was signed, seventy-eight years ago next September. Well, the Americans did what they could; their spirit was good, but they never could have succeeded without the French. My father fought for them under

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Rochambeau and Mad Anthony Wayne, and I fought for them under the gallant Hamtramck, and later, in 1812, under Arthur St. Clair. And now it seems, by the news we get from the South, as if you were going to have a chance to fight for them in your generation. But hurry on, my boy. Don't spend an unnecessary moment in this infernal bedlam here at the wharf. I have struck a bargain with an extortionate hack-driver, who will take us and your baggage to the Astor House for a trifle less than half my fortune, and we must install ourselves in his vehicle before some one else offers him double."

While we were rattling over the paving-blocks and cobblestones he endeavored to ask me some questions.

"Well, you have got your growth now, and you are not as tall as I by a couple of inches, I'll lay you a wager. What is your height, my boy?"

"Five feet ten and a half inches," I replied.

"I knew it," he said, triumphantly. "My father stood just six feet in his stockings, and I was half an inch taller than he. There are many that look up to me yet in the younger generation. But my good friend the doctor! Is he altogether a Frenchman now?"

"I think he is homesick for America," I said, "but his wife keeps him over there. He has a fine practice among the American colony in Paris, and is making money faster than he could in Hamtramck."

"Ay, ay! I don't doubt, but I am glad he has sent his boys home to make Americans of them. And how is the descendant of the dukes of Brittany, and your little sweetheart, Miss Étienne?" he added, with a sly glance at me. "Does she still vow she will marry none but you when she grows up, eh?"

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"Oh, P   , you forget!" I said, with a conscious blush; "she was only a little child then. She is sixteen now, and a grown young lady. She has been presented at court, goes to all the balls and levees, and her mother wishes her to make a fine match over there."

"A fine match!" echoed the Chevalier, crossly. "The day was when the Marquis de Macarty, the general of Louis XVI. of blessed memory, would have scorned to marry a Bretagne of Quebec. The airs these people put on nowadays are insufferable."

"I have her likeness," I said, blushing again. "You will see from this how she is grown," and I drew from my vest-pocket a small photograph of a fashionable young damsel in huge crinoline and flounces, Zouave jacket with full lace undersleeves, and a waterfall of curls.

The Chevalier scanned it closely. "It doesn't do her justice," he grumbled. "These new-fangled processes never do, the lines are so hard. You cannot improve on daguerreotypes, for they preserve all the softness of the skin and the delicacy of the outlines. What is that thing at the back of her head?"

"A waterfall, P   ," I explained. "That is the newest thing in hair-dressing. The Empress wore hers so at the last levee."

But I saw that the mention of the Empress's name had thrown him into a bad humor, and I hastened to give him some messages from his Legitimist friends, and to tell him of an audience that we had had with the Count of Chambord, in the home of his exile in lower Austria. By the time we had reached the Astor House his tranquillity was restored.

Later, however, when Mr. Arthur was announced, his humor changed again. He was very short and

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distant with my trustee, who, on his part, was all suavity and good-will. There were a number of papers to go through, of whose contents I understood little, but I gathered a general impression that my affairs had met with an extraordinary run of ill-luck, against which my trustee had been powerless to struggle.

"You had five hundred shares in the Forest Lake Copper-Mining Company," he explained. "I thought so well of it that I invested heavily for myself also. Unfortunately a great deal of money was required for expensive and elaborate machinery. There is a large bonded indebtedness of which we have the interest to meet half-yearly. There is absolutely no market for the shares, so we stockholders have had to bond ourselves still further, and for two years past there has been a heavy deficit. I have had to go into my own principal, and it has taken every cent of your income from all sources combined to meet your share."

"Then what money have I been living on?" I asked, hastily.

"Your grandfather has kept you in funds for the last two years," said Mr. Arthur, with an apologetic glance towards the wrathful-looking old gentleman. "But we have extricated you from the concern now in a most fortunate manner. You have surrendered the whole of your stock to the company, and in return they have released you from your share of the bonded indebtedness."

"And what do they give me for the stock?" I asked.

"Give you?" queried my trustee, staring politely. "I thought I explained that the stock is valueless."

"And fifty thousand dollars gone for nothing!" I exclaimed.

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"A little more than that," corrected Mr. Arthur. "As I told you, we had to increase our holdings and put more money into machinery and enlarge our plant. Your total holdings amounted to sixty-three thousand dollars."

"And all gone for nothing!" I gasped.

"You may consider yourself fortunate to be out of it. You have never had any income from the investment, so you will hardly feel the loss, while you are the gainer by not having a deficit to make up every year."

"Hold on!" I cried, with a sudden flash of recollection. "Your nephew, Montgomerie Moir, had ten thousand dollars in this mine when we were first together in Paris. He wished to get out of it then, as he considered it shaky, and threatened to show up the whole affair if he was not permitted to withdraw without loss; and you persuaded the stockholders to pay him dollar for dollar on his stock and let him go."

"That was another enterprise," said Mr. Arthur, easily, though I could vow I had seen him wince for an instant. "I can prove to you that my nephew is still a stockholder in this company for a large amount."

I did not feel convinced. "If it is advisable for you to stay in, why is it not advisable for me? I would rather hold on."

"It was a question of whether you could afford to hold on. I have considered the matter carefully from the point of view of your interests, and the Chevalier de Macarty fully concurs with me in the present arrangement." My grandfather nodded curtly. "You see, Michigan is slow in developing. There is no demand for copper; the expenses of machinery and transportation are enormous, and it is

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hard to convince Eastern capitalists of the wealth of Michigan's natural resources. In addition comes this scare of civil war from the South. We hope the trouble will be over in a few weeks, but if it should be prolonged the development of Michigan may be delayed many years more. I think I have said enough to make you see plainly how impossible it is for any but a wealthy capitalist to protect his investments there."

It certainly was a discouraging outlook, and I had nothing more to say. My Cuban estate, heavily mortgaged, had just been sold under a foreclosure to a Boston firm, and my only source of income seemed to be some shares in the Freight-Barge Construction Company. Mr. Arthur entered into an elaborate explanation why, under the reorganization laws of this company, I only held half the number of shares that he had originally bought for me, but it was difficult for me to understand these matters. The ways of corporations and boards of management seemed to be strangely devious and complicated, and I was utterly unable to follow them. There was one thing clear, however. Now that the copper-mine no longer swallowed up my dividends, I had from the source above mentioned a net income of nine hundred and twenty dollars, and was the possessor of some tracts of timber-land which might some day be valuable if roads and mills should ever be built in that part of the State. I could live frugally on this income; I might hope to add to it by my profession, and my grandfather would be relieved of the burden of my support. Mr. Arthur seemed to think that I had much to be thankful for, while he himself was overjoyed to feel that he had extricated me so successfully from a state of affairs that had caused him many years of grave anxiety on my account. As we left

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him, I noticed that my grandfather bowed to him with stately gravity, but without accepting his outstretched hand.

It seemed to me somewhat strange that my fortune should be so reduced by these investments, while my trustee, who was an investor in the same concerns, appeared to continue in them with ever-increasing prosperity. I expressed my surprise to the old gentleman as we were speeding on to Detroit over the new Great Western Railway, but he refused to talk on the subject.

"I have murder in my heart, Rodéric," he said, gloomily. "I am glad to have escaped from New York before I stained my soul with crime. We will talk this over another time. Let us change the subject and be cheerful as long as we may."

Full of tender, romantic devotion to the home of my childhood, I longed to rush out to Hamtramck as soon as we arrived in Detroit, but to my astonishment my grandfather seemed to be in no haste. He wished me to call with him on old friends in the city, to visit Ste. Anne's Church for a prayer of thanksgiving for our safe arrival, to look over the day's *Free Press* and *Tribune*, with the latest news from the seat of rebellion in the South. It was long after dark when we finally started on our drive out to Hamtramck, and so stormy and cloudy that I could hardly recognize the various landmarks as we passed them, but I greeted them all eagerly.

"It was here that the poor banished Acadians settled in 1755, when the English drove them from Nova Scotia. They were on their way to La Belle Rivière, but some of them concluded that le Détroit was quite as beautiful as anything they could hope to find on the Ohio. I wonder if Gabriel Lajeunesse was of that party? How I wish some of the old

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French homesteads were still standing! I should like to see just how our pioneer families lived, the Cuilleriers de Beaubien, the Barthes, the Pelletiers, the Chapotons, Campeaus, Chesnes, Navarres, Cicottes, Casse *dit* St. Aubin, and many other historic names of the early French period. Would not Count Pontchartrain be surprised if he could now see the little colony that Cadillac wrote him about in 1704 in such glowing terms! The colonial minister of Louis XIV. would never recognize the little stockaded Fort Pontchartrain in this fine city. Imagine his surprise upon seeing the steamboats that pass on the river nowadays. He would be as startled as were the Indians at their first view of the 'Walk-in-the-Water.' Now we come to where Meloche's house stood, where Pontiac held the gallant Colonel Campbell confined till the Chippewas killed the prisoner and ate his heart. Now we are following the route of Dalyell's sortie from Fort Pontchartrain, when he thought to crush Pontiac. The Indians waited until he got by, and then seized all the houses and orchards lining the road from the fort, and so cut off his retreat after the attack of Parent's Creek. Here stood the Campeau homestead, where the retreating British fortified themselves, after Dalyell had been slain and smeared with his own heart's blood. I suppose we are coming to Parent's Creek now, but it is so dark I cannot distinguish it. It has been well named 'Bloody Run,' for out of two hundred and fifty British that set out to conquer the Indians less than a hundred returned, and in full retreat. How pretty and quiet the ravine is now! It seems all the prettier because it is the only bit of rolling ground in this flat district. We are almost at Hamtramck now. I wish I could see better. How pitchy dark it is! I cannot distinguish the river at all. P  p  , to think

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of your really having known Colonel Hamtramck himself! Have you always lived here so near his old home?"

"Not till long after his death. He died in 1803, fifty-eight years ago," replied the old Chevalier. "I did not marry till after the War of 1812, and it was not till my marriage that I bought the farm and settled down near the home of my beloved commander."

"And I am so glad you bought it," I chatted on, merrily. "I could not bear to live in the city, or anywhere that we could not see the water. Somehow, though I have seen many historical rivers in Europe, none had for me the romantic charm of this one. I can never look at it or think of it without seeing in imagination the swarms of Indians paddling their canoes in its waters. I see the *coureurs des bois*, the explorers, the missionaries, the French soldiers and fur-traders, and all that wonderful band of men—Marquette and Joliet and Du Lhut, La Salle, Hennepin, Charlevoix, Tonty, Cadillac—how their very names send the blood coursing through one's veins! I see the stately forests cleared for the palisades of Fort Pontchartrain and for the farms of the French settlers from Wyandotte to l'Anse Creuse. It is all alive with history and adventure, with legends and marvels and romance, with zeal and endurance and untiring energy and devotion. Oh, Pépé, it has seemed sometimes as if my heart would burst if I could not catch one glimpse from our porch of the blue waters of le Détroit!"

But my grandfather answered me not. His head was sunk on his breast in moody silence. Heavy sighs then burst from him. No doubt his mind had wandered back to the past, with memories both joyous and sombre. We nearly missed the gate of our

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farm in the darkness, but soon we had driven up to the door, and Kate, our faithful old half-breed cook, and Barnabé, the French man-of-all-work about the house, were giving me an enthusiastic welcome home. Old Kate had prepared all my favorite dishes for the evening meal, and I had to eat far more than was good for me to save her from disappointment. The Chevalier seemed to have no appetite. After supper he sank back in an arm-chair, shading his eyes with his hand, and not replying a word to my eager exclamations as I moved about the rooms in joyous recognition of familiar objects.

"Hurrah!" I shouted, suddenly. "The storm is over. It is clearing now, the moon is struggling out from behind the clouds, and we shall soon have a glorious view of the water. I must rush across the orchard and down to the boat-house, for old times' sake."

I flung open the door and sprang out upon the veranda. There I hesitated a moment, with a strange, uncertain feeling. The moon was fairly clear, yet I did not see the river. Something seemed to intervene, some dark, shapeless, indistinguishable mass, that oppressed me and made me breathe heavily. I strained my eyes; I passed my hand across them to clear my vision.

"What nonsense!" I said, with a sharp laugh. "Coming out so suddenly from the bright light makes everything look dark and queer. My eyes will get used to it in a moment, but I can't see the orchard or the river just now, and it looks as if there were something standing there."

Something *was* standing there! It grew clearer and clearer, and took shape before me—the unmistakable shape of a huge brick-walled factory building, its tall chimney belching forth clouds of black smoke.

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"Why! why!" I exclaimed, breathlessly. I grew faint, I felt myself turn giddy and stagger. Then I lifted clenched hands towards heaven.

"My God, it cannot be! I won't have it!" I moaned through set teeth.

I heard an answering moan behind me, and, turning unwillingly, slowly, saw the Chevalier standing in the doorway, aged and haggard, his proud head drooped, his trembling hands held out supplicatingly towards me.

"Forgive me! Oh, Rodéric, my child, forgive me, forgive me! I did not dream you cared so much. God knows I tried to save your inheritance, but there was a curse on it, the fateful curse of the Nain Rouge, which no man can resist."

CHAPTER XIII

OH, Civilization! the abominations that are committed in thy name! Oh, relentless Progress, murderer of young romance and tender idealism! With the new era of manufacturing industry and wealth a wreath of soot and smoke was coming to crown the brows of the fair Queen of the Straits. The peaceful farms and comfortable residences of the older inhabitants were to suffer a change, to be converted into factories and docks and freight-yards, with the sound of hammers, the gleam of fires, the shrieking of steam, and the puffing of engines. My grandfather's orchard was the first in the outlying districts to be sacrificed, and for a while the only one, for the outbreak of the Southern rebellion delayed the march of progress for a time.

I tried to comfort the old man, as he faltered out his explanation. He had made his sacrifice without a murmur till he learned that it entailed a sacrifice for me also. Then his self-reproach was pitiful.

"But, P  p  , why was any sacrifice necessary? I am young and strong, I have my profession, I shall surely be able to earn something. We raise nearly everything we need on the farm itself, so that we require very little ready money. We can live like princes on my income, let alone what I may earn or what you may have."

"You do not understand, Rod  ric," he said, wearily. "I cannot conceal it from you any longer.

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My boy, you have not only lost your stock, you were being euchred out of all you possessed. I tried to rescue something for you, that is all."

"What can you mean?" I exclaimed. "Mr. Arthur has invested my money unfortunately, it seems to me stupidly. He may have served his own interests better than mine, but is there anything more?"

"Ay, ay, there is more, but that is the maddening part of it. He has done nothing criminal, nothing illegal, nothing that we can fight in the courts. It is business, that is all, but you and I do not understand business, Rory, my boy. We drag our notions of honor and morality into our money dealings with our friends, and it seems that is not business-like. We expect others to act as we know we should act ourselves in their position, but that, again, is not business. We are fools, you and I, Rodéric, a pair of sentimental fools, and we must suffer for our folly."

"I know that we are suffering, grandfather, but I do not yet know what our folly is."

"I forget. I must explain. Your guardian told you that as you could not afford any longer to be assessed for the yearly deficit of the Forest Lake Mine, you had surrendered your stock and been released from your share of the bonded indebtedness. He did not mention that you paid eighteen thousand dollars in cold cash for this release, in addition to the surrender of your stock. Ay, you well may exclaim and look incredulous! Do you think I paid a penny of it till I had consulted the best lawyer I could find in New York and paid him handsomely for his opinion? They offered you the choice of two things—to be assessed several thousand dollars yearly to cover the annual deficit, with no certainty of success in the end, and, should you refuse

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to go deeper into debt, threatened liquidation, in which case your stock would be valueless, and you would be liable for your share of the bonded indebtedness, thirty-six thousand dollars. The other proposition was for you to purchase your release from the whole concern by the surrender of your stock and the payment of eighteen thousand dollars. The lawyer advised the latter course, as he said that none but a capitalist could afford either to hold on to so uncertain a venture as copper or to fail for such an amount."

"I understand!" I said, bitterly. "Arthur and Moir can afford to hold on, for have they not had sixty-three thousand dollars from me in the past, besides the payment of nearly two thousand a year for the last four years, and now a present of eighteen thousand more? They can well afford to wait for a few uncertain years, till the mine begins to pay dividends, for then they will not have to share their profits with me, but can pocket them all. And the man who drives this bargain with me is my father's friend, the trustee of his orphaned child!"

"Ay, but he has another orphan under his guidance, and an Arthur to boot," cried the Chevalier, the blood of the de Macartys boiling in his veins. "You were right, Rodéric, in your suspicion, for I have it from Émile McNiff—who is one of their clerks, though he is not responsible for their doings—that Montgomerie Moir wished to withdraw from the venture four years ago, and threatened to expose its management if they did not let him do so. It was a species of blackmail which you or I would not stoop to, but it succeeded from his point of view, for they all contributed, you among others, to buy his stock of him at par value, dollar for dollar. Now his name appears again on their books in your place as a

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stockholder to the amount of sixty-three thousand dollars! You have been frozen out, poor fellow, and Moir reaps the benefit."

"And was there nothing, nothing we could do?" I groaned. It was so hard to sit still and be imposed upon. I felt an insane desire to kill somebody, it did not much matter who.

"Nothing. I tell you that the best legal opinion I could get declared that there was no use trying to fight. In a business affair of that kind the rich man controls the situation because he is rich, and he will come out of it richer than ever, while the poorer man must go to the wall and lose all that he has. Of course you had no cash to pay out for your release, and I would not allow Arthur to sell your shares in the only thing that brought you any income. He offered to take your timber lands at his own valuation, but I have been told that there can be great fortunes made in lumber, and the very fact that Arthur was willing to accept your lumber interest in lieu of cash payment made me certain that it was worth several times what he valued it at. Then I turned to see what I could realize from property of my own—the farm and the orchard. Nobody wanted the farm, but the Yondotega Iron Works needed the orchard, with the pier and four hundred feet frontage on the river. They paid me twenty thousand dollars for the property, and I have put the balance aside for you to develop your timber lands with. I did not know it would break your poor heart like this, my boy!"

We were both flushed and choking, but I did my best to cheer him up. "Never mind, Pépé! We will take the money that is left, and we will cut down the lumber and make a fortune. Then we will buy back the orchard, tear down their old factory, and

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plant the field again with French pears, with peaches, and genuine Calville apples, and it will be like old times again."

He tried to believe me, and I tried to believe in myself, and so we comforted each other and strove to forget. The stately elms and forest trees that bordered the lawn helped to shut out the hideous brick walls of the factory, and we could still catch a glimpse of the river and of Belle Isle across the lawns and orchards of our neighbors, but it was not so easy to shut out from our hearts the sting of injustice, the bitter sense of helplessness under a cruel wrong, the pain of injury at the hands of a friend, so much deeper than any pain that can be wrought by a known enemy.

It was some relief to my feelings to write a full account of affairs to my loyal little friend Étienne. It was enough to tell her what had happened. I should not need to describe the emotions I had passed through, for she knew me and she would understand them. I never for an instant doubted that I should have her complete sympathy, nor was I mistaken. It was a month before I received her answer, and when it came the letter was postmarked "New York." She wrote that, in spite of her mother's tears and protestations, her father had insisted on their returning to America, and had offered his services to the country as surgeon in the campaign against the Southern rebels. The rest of her letter was all about me and my affairs. It was straight to the point, full of loyalty to my interests, of indignation for my unjust treatment, of perfect comprehension of all my sentiments, and of confidence in my ability to right my wrongs and confound my enemies. It was signed, "Always your stanch friend, Étienne." Yes, dear little girl, with all

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her vanities and ambitions, her love of finery and success, she was true gold at heart, and I could rely on her loyal, whole-hearted, sympathetic friendship as long as we both should live. I felt better, more at peace when I had read her letter, and the touch of it near my heart, where it lay for many a day, brought me precious moments of consolation.

It seems strange to me now that I did not reply to her letter as promptly as she had responded to mine, the stranger that in it she had asked me some questions. In a first postscript she wrote: "Has Mr. Montgomerie Moir any knowledge of this affair? We see a great deal of him, for he came over in the steamer with us, and I know he is related to Mr. Arthur. He never likes to talk about you, and when I ask him why, he replies that I am too young to understand. Do you suppose that he knows about the way you have been treated and feels too sensitive to speak of it, or do you suspect any other reason why he should avoid your name? I cannot rest till I find out whether he is your friend or your foe."

The second postscript was shorter. It merely said, "Was the name of your family plantation in Cuba the 'Selva Alegre'?"

I did not deserve to hear from her again when I could neglect to reply to such a letter, but a few days later came a shorter note to say that her father and Rémy had both joined the Union army, that she and her mother would not return to Detroit, but would stay in New York until the trouble was over, so as to be nearer the seat of war if anything happened. Many young Americans in Paris had returned to go to the war. Mr. Moir would have liked to enlist, but he had injured his knee some years before and, though he showed no trace of lameness now, yet he

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could not stand a soldier's life. He returned to America because he had invested in some Cuban property, where he was sure a fortune could be made in sugar, owing to the troubles in our Southern sugar-producing States.

It provoked me that she should write so much about Mr. Moir. What did I care about his knee or his speculations in Cuban sugar? Why need she add that he would be much missed in Paris, as he was one of the exceptional men in the American colony there, that he talked exquisite French, had delightful manners, and understood art, music, and European politics, so that one never had to blush for him, as one must so often do for one's countrymen. Why did she not write more about me and my affairs? Why did she not reproach me for leaving her first letter unanswered? I did not like this second letter at all, so I tore it up, though I did not disturb the former one from its resting-place.

I fully intended to write her at some time, but I was greatly occupied in looking for a chance to establish myself in my profession. By day and by night I was engrossed with the conception of a deep waterway through the flats and shifting sand-bars at the mouth of the Sainte-Claire River. I was planning the design of a double canal, with stone embankments crowned with shrubs and trees, and with light-houses built after the model of a Venetian campanile. The sands would be held back by myriads of piles driven into them, on which might be built boat-houses, shooting-boxes—even hotels for the benefit of the sportsmen who came in great numbers every season to the flats for the fishing and duck-shooting. What an opportunity for engineer and architect to work together and make from these unsightly, dangerous shoals, not only a passage for

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the largest ships to the commerce of the upper lakes, but also a miniature Venice, a floating, fairy city of the straits.

The United States Lake Survey then had its headquarters in Detroit. As the government employed also the services of civil engineers and contractors, I had the opportunity to compete for some of their enterprises, and at the same time bring some of my projects to their notice. They were pleased with my skill at draughtsmanship, and seemed to think me clear-headed and energetic in organizing and directing the practical portions of the work assigned me, but I had to receive many a mild snubbing about my "fancy schemes," as they called them, and to endure some good-natured criticism levelled at foreign-bred Americans who were always trying to distort the genius of a new country into the likeness of an older civilization. I suppose they felt towards my projects much as I felt in regard to the dreams of the young Edison lad at Fort Gratiot, with whom I had struck up a friendship in some of my shooting or surveying expeditions up the Sainte-Claire River. His father was care-taker of the fort, one of the oldest of the military outposts, founded by Du Lhut in 1688, and called Fort St. Joseph, which had played a part in the early warfare with the Indians and in the War of 1812. It was an antiquated affair, long since abandoned as a post, but still preserved by the government as an historic monument. The care-taker's son had always interested me greatly, and was certainly an extraordinary lad, working out alone and unaided the most delicate and complicated electrical experiments; but unfortunately he was exceedingly unpractical, or so I thought, wasting his skill and talents on the most impossible and chimerical schemes. It seemed to me that while

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young Edison and I were both dreaming dreams for the benefit of mankind, there was this essential difference between them—my dreams, though perhaps artistically somewhat in advance of our Western progress, were eminently practical and easy of fulfilment in our rich, energetic, growing young country, while the dreams of Thomas Edison were as impracticable, as futile, and vague as the impossible visions which Bulwer was to embody in *The Coming Race*.

And so I dreamed and schemed, and worked and planned, trying to forget such ugly facts as war, the loss of my fortune, and the unpleasant passages in Nita's last letter, till I was rudely awakened by the Chevalier. My grandfather was deeply engrossed in the news from the seat of disturbance at the South. He buried himself in the newspapers, he talked politics incessantly with his neighbors—McNiff, an ardent Republican, and La Farge, a so-called War Democrat. But with neighbor Dennison, a Democrat of the variety known as "Copperhead," he had little discussion. It was evident that the Chevalier strongly favored the war, and that he could not understand and was deeply hurt by my lack of interest in it.

"To think," he sighed, after vainly trying to rouse me to a discussion of the Southern question—"to think that the country should be at war again and not a de Macarty in it!"

"But, P  p  ," I exclaimed, "how can a man fight if he has no sympathy for either side? I cannot wish the North to win, for that would entail the freeing of the slaves, which I should regard as a great calamity. On the other hand, how can I wish the South to win, when it would mean the destruction of the Union, which would also be a calamity? Neither cause appeals to me."

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"Cause!" echoed the Chevalier. "Who talks about a cause? Who cares about a cause? I have a *country*, and my country's cause is mine, 'for better, for worse, till death us do part'! Why did my great-grandfather leave Ireland? To seek freedom! Why did my father leave France? To help others obtain freedom! What country did my father fight for? The United States. What country did I fight for in 1812? The United States! I know of no Confederate States! I know neither North nor South, East nor West! The United States is my country, its cause is my cause, and it is the cause of freedom for all, black or white, Irish or French or African! Child, child! have you a drop of Irish blood in you and yet can sit still at such a time? Can you see such a fight going on and not take a gun?"

I paced my room through that night in great agitation. I do not think I was a coward, or that my grandfather thought me one; I simply had no desire to fight because I loved peace, I loved my profession, and the things my heart was bound up in were the things of peace and not the things of war. Besides, I was drawn by ties of kinship on the paternal side to the South; the Southern blood seemed hotter than the Irish blood just then and struggled fiercely against my Northern breeding and the lessons of patriotism instilled by my grandfather. To add to this was my deep-rooted repulsion to the negro race, which made me turn with aversion from the thought of their emancipation and the overthrow of slavery. Yet there had been a time when, at the bidding of a girl I loved, I had risked my life for a negro's freedom! Could I doubt what Alix would ask me to do now? All at once I seemed to remember the touch of Étienne's innocent hand on mine as she gave me the little picture of the martyr Stephen praying

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for his enemies. With a rush there came over me the memory of Father Lacordaire's last words to me, spoken with illumined countenance and penetrating, far-seeing eyes, "Never forget, my child, that you are the follower of Him Who died for His enemies."

I sank on my knees before my crucifix. Must I, then, go to war? Must I fight for those I loathed? Must I leave the things of peace that I claved to, the profession I had studied so hard and had made such a good start in, the schemes with which I hoped to do so much good, the dear home and the loving grandfather, who would break his heart if I were killed, and yet would break it if I shunned death? Must I leave Nita for God knows how long, with my mortal enemy by her side, perhaps making love to her, perhaps slandering me, perhaps winning her during my absence and silence?

Clearly and more clearly came back to me words which seemed now inspired. I saw the white-robed figure and keen, kind eyes of the saintly Dominican, as he said to me, "You cannot, as the citizen of a great Democracy, be indifferent to its various public vicissitudes, and you may be called upon to act in the full measure of your strength." So this, then, was the call, and my strength was to be measured—the strength of my love for Him Who forgave His enemies, the strength of my patriotism and my citizenship! I clasped the crucifix to my breast and a great calm sank on my spirit.

"I will go," I murmured. "For my God and my country—my God and my country!"

CHAPTER XIV

THE history of my career during the Civil War will be but short writing. It contained naught of glory, little of adventure, less of reward, much of suffering. I was offered a commission on the staff of a general of volunteers, but I refused, knowing nothing of military drill or tactics. To be sure, other volunteers, equally inexperienced, were going as captains, and even as colonels, but that was their affair. I knew that I could not command, but that I should make a good private, for I could handle a gun, I could shoot straight, I could endure much fatigue—being used to roughing it with Indians and trappers—and at least I could always fulfil the first duty of a soldier—obedience. I was appointed to a volunteer engineer regiment, and we were despatched to the Cumberland Valley, where we operated with the division under Brigadier-General Rosecrans.

The day after my arrival in camp I was greeted by a hearty slap on the shoulder from no light hand, and by a hearty voice, exclaiming, "Well, young fellar! you air grown a mite since I last seen you. 'Air you ready, Mr. Brown'? Haw, haw, haw! But I war ready for 'em!" and, turning, I recognized the raw-boned Ohio engineer of the ice-bound tug on the night of the rescue of the fugitive slave.

"Lor', but I can hear that devil of an Indian yell now! Reckon he war some friend o' yours?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Haliburton," I said, as I shook

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his long, lean hand cordially. "He taught me nearly everything I know in the way of boating, fishing, and trapping, and he was loyal to his pupil. I might have known I should meet you here, sir, fighting in such a cause."

"You needn't to 'sir' me, though they do call me major hereabouts. Yes, sirree! I raised a company of niggers, all runaway slaves. Most of 'em I'd helped over to Canady myself, and they war glad to come back and fight for the freedom of their fellow-critters. Some nice boys among 'em. But, sho! how is it you airn't a general at least? How come it you got on a plain private's rig—no stars, no straps, hey? I'd 'a' thought you war born to lead a brigade if not an army corpse."

"I have just joined as a private of the volunteer engineer corps, and it is only my second day in camp. They haven't discovered my talents yet," I laughed, "but I expect a brigadier-general's commission next week."

"It didn't take me no week or no hour to find out your talents," grumbled Major Haliburton. "You make roads, do you? and bridges, and that kind o' thing? Say, I can give you p'int's about roads in this part of the country. You don't find no paving-stones all shaped to your order lying about here, nor no Doric colyumns, but I know a thing or two about gettin' a wagon through a swamp or over fallen trees that may be useful to you in case the gentlemen in the swallow-tail coats at your college didn't find it printed in their books."

"I shall be delighted if I may come to you for advice and ideas, Major Haliburton."

"There's where you have the advantage of me, as they say in genteel society, Mr. Jones. You made a guess at my name once, and I set you right,

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but you haven't set me in the way o' knowin' yourn yet."

"I'll answer to Jones on a pinch," I quoted, smilingly, "but my name is Frémont—Rodéric Frémont."

"Robert Kidd Fray-mong?" he ventured, cautiously. "I reckon I could say it plainer if you wrote it down for me."

"You know the name well enough; but I forget sometimes and give it a French twist in pronouncing it," I explained, writing it out as legibly as possible on the two-spot of spades which he handed to me.

"*Free-mont!*" he shouted, almost jumping into the air. "Freemont! No wonder I loved you the moment I set eyes on you! Air you any relation to that great man whose name you bear, John C. Frémont, who was my candidate for President of the United States, who married pretty Jessie Benton from hereabouts, and is the idol of every patriot's heart?"

"We are of the same stock, though I suspect there is no near relationship," I explained. "My paternal grandfather and General Frémont's father were both of French descent."

"Your paternal grandfather war to be congratulated," said Major Haliburton, solemnly. "Live up to your name, young fellar. I can ask no better thing for you in this world than that."

True to his word, the Buckeye abolitionist gave me the full benefit of his experiences in pioneer work along the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, but to his chagrin and indignation I was not able to make any use of his suggestions. I was a private, and to appear to know more than my comrades only served to arouse their jealousy and suspicion, and quickly won for me the titles of "the furrin arristycrat" and "Master Know-it-all." In order to live at peace with my fellows I must diligently conceal my tal-

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ents in a napkin. Moreover, I was quick to see that not only the commanding officer but also the subalterns resented the idea of receiving advice from the ranks, and that for the sake of discipline I must hold my tongue and carry out orders, even where I knew them to be blunders.

My five weeks of service in the Union army were uneventful. Our outposts were engaged in frequent small skirmishes with Confederate sharpshooters, in which we did not always come out best, and the news that leaked down to the ranks from higher circles was not of an encouraging character. It was rumored that the Confederate forces had captured Washington and were marching victoriously through Pennsylvania, that the columns of Jackson's army were sweeping up the Mississippi Valley and would soon force us to retreat. The men whispered the news under their breath, and were on the verge of a panic. We were kept busy on roads, for the transportation question was an exceedingly serious one, and caused many embarrassing delays. I hewed logs and shovelled dirt till my unaccustomed muscles ached, and the blanket in which I wrapped myself at night did not keep out the dampness of the marshy ground on which we lay. When I had camped out in Michigan there had been no lack of hemlock boughs for couches, and the soil was either of sandy or rocky nature, the air crisp and invigorating; but the swamps of Tennessee and Mississippi were of different character. My joints were rapidly stiffening, and my frame shook with nightly chills.

"Cuss! cuss! cuss!" exclaimed my Buckeye friend, hacking viciously with his jack-knife at a huge chunk of tobacco. "It's enough to make a Quaker swear to see you making yo'rself sick there over a day-laborer's work, when you air fitted to

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stand over the whole doggone lot of 'em. I tell you what it is, Robert, you better quit that there corpse and take a command in my regiment. One o' my leftenants had to go and break his thigh-bone by his horse steppin' in a hole and throwin' him. The place is yourn for the askin'. What d' you say?"

I did not wish to hurt my friend's feelings by a refusal, I did not wish to appear to hold myself above any human being, black or white, but the thought of a lieutenancy in a negro regiment was more than I could stand, and somewhat reluctantly I told him the story of my infancy and my tragic associations with the negro race.

"Sho! now! I don't blame you; it's against human natur' to forget such a thing as that! I can't ask you to do it, for it ain't in flesh and blood to get over them things. I see you air a Christian, and you wouldn't do 'em no evil in return; you even fight for 'em, which does you honor; and doubtless you call to mind they have a pretty big case against the white folks on their side; but I wouldn't try ter force you into no associations contrairy to human natur'. But, say! however come it that you war out a-rescuin' a runaway nigger at the peril of yo'r own life? I'll bet you there war some gal at the bottom o' that! There! what I tell you? You air as red as a turkey-cock! Jehoshaphat! but it beats all what a man 'll do if a gal just ask him!"

About this time the discovery of my talents was made by a young lieutenant of engineers, who found it very convenient to detail me to do some of his duties, especially when the line of our work lay near the enemy's outposts. He would ensconce himself safely behind a tree, with his pipe and his bottle, and leave me to survey the country or oversee the construction gang. At the end of three or four days

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he received credit from his superior officer for the best bit of road construction that had been done in that section. The following day he was appointed to a difficult piece of railroad work near a small country town. Throughout the morning his ambition was roused, and he attended faithfully to his duties, but in the noon-day heat his energy flagged, and, leaving me in charge, he made a bee-line across lots for a squalid-looking tavern on the outskirts of the town. In the course of the afternoon an adjutant rode up in haste with orders for the engineers to abandon the work, as the enemy were coming upon us in force. I sent the men back, and then felt it my duty to warn my lieutenant of his danger. I found him at the tavern in a state of semi-intoxication, and with some difficulty dragged him forth; but as soon as he began to comprehend the danger he started at a dead run across the fields. He was a splendid mark for sharp-shooters, and the bullets soon began to whistle. There was nothing for me to do but to rush into the open after him and drag him towards the woods nearest to our lines. We did not pause on reaching shelter, but ran on ignominiously for nearly a half-mile through swamps and tangled underbrush, when suddenly we saw a form crouching in the bushes a little way ahead of us. The young officer turned and darted off at a tangent, while I stood to cover his flight, and drew my revolver, determined to sell my life dearly.

"Fo' Gawd's sake, massa, don't shoot!" wailed a piteous voice, and in the heap of humanity that crawled forth from the bushes I recognized one of Major Haliburton's negro volunteers.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, sternly, though he might well have put the same question to me.

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"Gawd knows I couldn't help it, massa," he stammered. "I jus' had to run away! We was gettin' nigher and nigher de ole plantation whar I use ter work, an' I hyeard de Secesh was lickin' de Yankees, an' I thought ole massa would come along wid de bloodhounds and take me back. I couldn't stay to march any nigher; no, dat's what I couldn't. I jus' had to run away. I suspicion yere am de bery swamp whar I done hide when I firs' run from ole massa, and use ter lay listenin' in de water for de barkin' ob de dogs. I thought ter get up ter de North, as I did befo'e, but I'se done hurt my leg, and I can't walk, massa; I can't walk, and I'se bound to stay yere till I die, widouten you carry me back to de camp."

He was a sorry-looking object, plastered with mud and slime, the broken bone almost sticking through the skin of his leg, which was inflamed and swollen to the size of two. His eyes rolled till only the whites were to be seen.

"Carry you back to camp!" I exclaimed, crossly. "Why, man, it's as much as I can do to run fast enough to save my own skin, let alone stopping to carry you."

A peculiar singing noise came in time to emphasize my words.

"Massa! don't leave me here for de dogs to get! Carry me back to de deepes' part o' de swamp, fo' de lub o' Gawd!"

There was not much love of God in my heart just then, nothing but impatience and anger at this delay, for the bullets were whistling near us, and every second's loss of time was lessening my hope of safety by flight. With an exclamation of mingled rage and disgust, I stooped and picked up the loathsome object and half carried, half dragged him back into the oozy

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depths of the morass, silencing his groans with repeated warnings. He clung to me, frenzied with pain and terror. I could not shake him off, and, indeed, I began to realize that I might as well make up my mind to stay with him in his hiding-place, for I could tell by the forest sounds that the woods were rapidly filling up with Confederate scouts and sharp-shooters. It was a mercy that they did not hear us, for the poor negro groaned incessantly, and I could not hush his outcries of pain with every movement. I laid him down in a damp bed among the reeds, and crouched beside him to listen. The distant human sounds were growing fainter and farther off, but my ear, trained by Indian trappers, could easily detect the direction in which they were proceeding, and I knew that the enemy now stood between us and the Union position, cutting off our road to liberty, and that they were encamping within gunshot of our hiding-place.

The negro, his sufferings aggravated by fright, was now in a high fever. Weakened by pain, hunger, and exposure, his life was doomed, and I began to think over the chances of saving my own. My only hope was to steal away in the darkness that was fast gathering in around us, and by a wide *dé-tour* pass beyond the rebel outposts—

"Massa!" wailed the voice by my side, "I'se a-gwine to die, I knows it! I can't hold on much longer, but I don't want de dogs to get at me! Stay by me, massa, till I go—it won't be long—and bury me down deep, deep in de water, whar de dogs will lose de scent and won't tear me up. Promise me, massa, good massa!"

Unwillingly enough I gave the poor wretch the desired promise, and he was soon wandering off in a delirium. Now it was so dark I could no longer

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discern his face or form, and he had ceased groaning, but was singing, in a faint, hoarse voice, old camp meeting hymns and "spirituals":

"Jedus call in de moonlight!
Jedus call in de starlight!
Jedus call in de midnight cry!
An' I ain't got time ter tarry.
'Come home! Come home!
See God chillen, dey linger!
Come home! Come home!
'Member dyin' day!'"

The long evening passed, and still God's child lingered, and the pathetic wail kept on in the peculiar intervals of the barbaric scale, with halting rhythms and choking breath:

"'Come home! Come home!
See God chillen, dey linger!'"

Even though the night hid his face from me, even though we stood together in the darkness of the shadow of death, I could not control the repulsion of race and association. It startled me to see such depth of hatred and loathing in my soul, and with one supreme effort I groaned, "O Christ! teach me to forgive and to forget," and, bending down, I took the repulsive figure in my arm, bowed over the rough head, and, standing up to my knees in the slimy ooze, I forced myself to bathe the swollen, fevered cheeks and brow with the brackish water of the swamp. As I did so my repugnance gradually disappeared, tears welled from my eyes, and unutterable tenderness filled my heart.

"Poor child of God!" I whispered, "you are safe now. He is taking you to His breast. The gates of glory will open to you soon. There is no fear or danger there."

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"Trabbel on! my weary soul!
I hyeard from hebben to-day,"

chanted the weak, hoarse voice ;

"Hurry on, my weary soul!
My Fader call an' I mus' go!"

And with the "midnight cry" came the call, and the weary soul of God's poor black child lingered no longer, but hurried on to answer the call in its everlasting home!

The sky was gray with the first streak of dawn as I dug his grave deep and safe, cutting away the tangled roots with my bowie-knife, and leaving the water to flow around it in wide channels. I fashioned a rude cross above it, and knelt to say a prayer before I turned to take thought of my own safety in the coming day.

I had no food, and the woods were full of enemies, as I knew by the ever-recurring sounds. To stay in hiding meant slow death ; to venture forth among the enemy meant either resistance unto death or surrender. I could not see that my death would in any way benefit my country. Perhaps this was not a heroic conclusion, but it seemed to me common-sense that after I should have made every effort to evade the enemy and reach camp, if I were to find myself hopelessly surrounded I should give up without resistance. I started cautiously in a direction whence no sounds were audible. I had not walked many hundred yards before I suddenly came on three men in gray crouching before a smouldering fire.

Before I had time to slink off, they looked up and caught sight of my wet, pitiable figure.

"Hulloa, Bud!" said one.

"Come, dry yourself, son," said another.

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"Have a bit o' bacon?" asked the third.

My revolver was in my hand, their guns were stacked beyond their reach. I might have got away with three murders on my soul, but their kindness disarmed me. I did not feel in a murderous mood, as I looked into their friendly, rugged faces. I backed off cautiously, keeping my eye on them and my revolver pointed at them, intending to hold them thus till there was more space between us, and then make a dash for liberty. Suddenly, without sound of warning, I felt myself pinioned from behind. I struggled passionately in the arms of two stalwart Confederates for some moments, but it was useless, and I sullenly submitted, while they led me back to the group by the fire.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I reckon I had better, under the circumstances, accept your hospitality for the present."

"Reckon yer had!" they replied, dryly. I handed my revolver and knife to the eldest of the three, who received them with a gracious sweep of the hand, and threw his wide cape over my shoulders as I knelt shivering before the embers.

And so ended my brief, inglorious career in the service of my country.

CHAPTER XV

PERHAPS I should include among my services to my country the sufferings of twenty-two months of slow torture in the prisons of my captors. I have no complaint to make against the Confederates, for God knows they suffered themselves. They had no agriculture, no commerce to provide them with food, no factories to supply them with blankets and clothing, no salt-works to preserve their meats. Their own soldiers, during those latter years of the war, were sleeping without shelter or covering, were eating rotten, wormy food, were dying of exposure and disease. What, then, had they to offer their prisoners? Freedom of movement and the frequent change of camping-ground gave them, of course, an immense sanitary advantage over prisoners herded together like cattle in pens, but I attribute nothing in the misery of our condition to any inhumanity on the part of our captors. My later experiences of war and warfare have taught me that the horrors of our situation were practically unavoidable under such conditions, and I have no feelings but those of liking and respect for the gallant supporters of a lost cause.

The uselessness of my sacrifice sometimes weighed upon my spirits. It seemed as if I should have served my country better by staying with my dear grandfather and laboring for the extension of its commerce and the beautifying of its waterways,

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rather than by shovelling dirt for five weeks and languishing in prison for nearly two years. Perhaps, if I had gone through the excitement of a battle the sacrifice would have seemed more worth while ; but as it was, I could only strive to console myself by calling to mind the words of Père Lacordaire, "Prepare yourself assiduously to be worthy of the highest citizenship, and if no beautiful day is to dawn on your country, at least the day of God will dawn upon your own soul!" I had faithfully endeavored to do what seemed to be my duty of citizenship, and if my work showed little result I must leave the end to God and be at peace.

The day that I was led forth from prison and carried to Washington—gaunt, emaciated, bearded, hollow-eyed, and fever-worn—the friends to whose arms I was restored hardly knew me. I was too weak and weary to understand why they wept at sight of me, why Dr. Chabert and Rémy lifted me in their strong arms, laid me on the hospital cot with such tenderness, and spoke in whispers about "breaking it to the Chevalier." Apparently they thought I was going to die, which surprised me, for I really felt well and contented, and very happy to be among my own again, only strangely weak. I thought, too, that they had all grown deaf, for though I spoke out loud and strong, as it seemed to me, yet I had difficulty in making them hear. They told me afterwards that my voice had been a mere whisper. My grandfather did not weep over me as they had done, but, as he came and stood by my bedside, declared, in a loud, emphatic voice, that all I needed to make me look as sturdy as the best of them was a clean shave and some good, nourishing food ; that a soldier would be ashamed to come through a war looking as sleek and well-fed as a civilian. But

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they told me later that he only kept up his bravado as far as the doorway, and there he fell in a dead faint, and all through the night he was weeping and calling for his bonnie, laughing little Rory to come back to him again.

I had often wondered during those weary months in prison why my friends had not effected an exchange for me, as was done in the case of so many prisoners. I feared that my grandfather must be dead, for I could not imagine him sitting still and letting me suffer while there was anything to be done. One day, after my strength had begun to return again, I felt sufficient interest in life to make inquiries of my good friend the doctor.

"Why, you see, it was this way, Éric: nobody knew exactly what had become of you. You might as well know first as last that it was supposed for a long while you were a deserter."

"A deserter?" I echoed, astonished and indignant.

"You were missing, you see, and no one could give a satisfactory explanation of your movements. The lieutenant in command of your company said that you had left your post and gone to a neighboring tavern, and that later, when he warned you the Confederates were coming up, you tried to lead him into a trap where some rebel sharp-shooters were concealed in the woods. He swore that the last he saw of you was in company with a man who had deserted from Major Haliburton's regiment two days before."

"That part is true," I said. "The rest is perverted."

"Of course, of course! All is known now, and the officer has been court-martialled and sentenced to fine and loss of rank. But for nearly two years, my poor Rodéric, your name was on the rolls of your

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regiment as a deserter. It was only through the unceasing efforts of the Chevalier and Major Haliburton that your reputation was cleared and your whereabouts discovered. I was in the field hospitals, and could do little in your service, but we applied to Colonel Moir—”

“Colonel!” I interrupted. “Moir a colonel! I thought he was disabled and could not enter the army.”

“Er—he was disabled for field duty,” explained the honest doctor, with a slight, embarrassed hesitation; “but he—er—obtained a colonelcy in the commissary department, with headquarters in Washington, about a year ago. He has made a fortune in Cuban sugar, and has given a good deal of money to the campaign, and so has the ear of all the Washington officials. Unfortunately he had not the faith in you that we had. He said that, what with your Southern blood and your well-known aversion to negroes, he was convinced you had taken the opportunity to slide over to the Confederates, and that we should find you fighting with one of the Southern armies.”

“No doubt he would have liked to have me hanged for a traitor,” I muttered, “now that he has got all out of me that he can.”

“No, no,” corrected the doctor, hastily. “When your name was once cleared there was no one worked harder than he to effect your exchange. Major Haliburton had sworn all along that the little lieutenant was lying in order to get the credit of all the good engineering work you had done for him; but for a long time he could not leave his regiment to look up proof in the matter. It was your poor, dear grandfather, Rodéric, who travelled up and down the length of the land, who spent every penny he possessed, who haunted the War Department and dogged

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the footsteps of generals and cabinet officers, and of that great-hearted man, the President, who forced the scoundrelly young lieutenant into a confession of the true state of affairs, who convinced Colonel Moir that you were a prisoner, not a deserter, and now has succeeded in establishing your good name, in dragging you from your living grave and nursing you back to life and health again."

My dear grandfather! What did I not owe him? Dr. Chabert had no need to speak to me of my debt to this beloved parent. But it was an easy debt to repay, for I had only to grow well and strong, to be near him and to look contented, that was all that he required to make him happy and to reward him a hundredfold for the toil he counted as nothing.

"*Dans les prisons de Nantes*," sang a gay, sweet voice at my door one day, when I had been pronounced strong enough to sit up.

"*Dans les prisons de Nantes
Il y a-t-un prisonnier.
Gai, faluron, falurette!
Gai, faluron, dondé!
Personne ne va l'voir
Que la fille du geôlier.
Gai, faluron, falurette!
Gai, faluron, dondé!*" *

A gracious apparition floated into view, in which I had no difficulty in recognizing our pretty Étienne. I was not prepared, however, to have my heart beat so tumultuously at sight of her, and was furious to find myself greeting her with the awkwardness and

* In the prison cell at Nantes
There is a prisoner.
Gay, etc.
No one visits him there
Save the jailer's daughter
Gay, etc.

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confusion of a country booby. How bewitchingly stylish and dainty she looked, her turban hat tipped down over her straight little nose, her black eyes flashing out brilliantly from under its brim. She was taller than I had expected, and the round, chubby face of girlhood had lengthened into an exquisite oval. She had developed in the three years since I had last seen her into a very sweet, graceful vision of elegant young womanhood. My embarrassment was slightly relieved by the discovery that, in spite of her elegance and vivacity, Miss Nita was also suffering from a slight feeling of embarrassment. She talked and laughed a little too much at first to be perfectly natural, and this put me more at my ease.

"You have fallen off dreadfully in your looks," she declared—"that is, measuring them only by bulk. I do not criticise you for what you are, but for what you are not. No wonder they would not let me see you before they had 'fattened you up,' as they call it; I should have mistaken you for the Loup Garou, and fled."

"How happens it that you are in Washington, brightening the lives of poor convalescents, instead of gracing the Court of the Louvre? Where are your ambitions?" I asked.

"I am still ambitious," she laughed; "the same bad penny, a little shined up to pass muster here, for one must be patriotic nowadays or nothing. I am a member of the Sanitary Commission, if you please," with a low courtesy. "I pull lint by the bushel and make soup by the gallon. You have probably been fed on my soup, and that is why you still are so thin.

" 'Elle lui porte à boire,
Gai, faluron, falurette!
À boire et à manger,
Gai, faluron, dondé!"

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I usually visit the hospitals in business-like manner, with apron and cap; but to-day I was to see you, so I have put on my best bib and tucker, to make an impression on you."

"You never have failed to make an impression on me in any costume," I remarked. "You have made many ineffaceable ones which I shall carry to my grave. I do not refer to the one on my heart—that would be out of place just now—but I still carry a black-and-blue spot on my shin, and the scar of a scratch near the corner of my eye—"

"For shame, Éric Frémont! you calumniator! I never did such a thing in my life!" she cried, indignantly. "I may have slapped you occasionally, I admit it, for I had provocation—but scratched? No, never! I drew the line at pinching and scratching!"

"And pulling hair," I added, gravely.

"It was the other way. Your memory is distorted by your long imprisonment. It was you that did the hair-pulling. You might have a fine wig of brown curls in your possession by this time if you had cared for keepsakes. But if you tease me any longer, Rodéric, I shall be sorry I ever got you out of prison."

"You!" I exclaimed. "This is the first I have heard of *your* having anything to do with it!"

"The ungrateful Chevalier not to tell! Why, I thought I did it all!"

"You did!" I exclaimed, mockingly, taking up the refrain of her song,

" 'La fille, encore jeunette,
Les pieds lui a lâché,
Gai, faluron, falurette!
Gai, faluron, dondè! ' " *

* The girl so young and gentle
Unchained his feet straightway.
Gay, etc.

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Then I, half mischievously, half tenderly, added the concluding verses of the old chanson :

“ ‘ Si je retourne à Nantes,
Oui, je me marierai.
 Gai, faluron, falurette!
 Gai, faluron, dondé!
Et je prendrai pour ma femme
La fille du geôlier!
 Gai, faluron, falurette!
 Gai, faluron, dondé! ” *

But she checked me with sudden gravity and continued: “Of course, I didn’t know until three months ago that you were in prison at all. I thought you were fighting in the Confederate army, and I couldn’t blame you, for it would have been so natural for you to do so, with all your Southern affiliations. But as soon as the Chevalier told me where you were I never gave Colonel Moir one moment’s rest until he had moved heaven and earth to get your exchange.”

So she openly boasted of her influence with Colonel Moir! Doubtless he had found time for love-making as well as money-making amid his arduous labors in the Commissary Department! I felt myself grow a little pale.

“Is he still devoted to you, Nita?” I asked, somewhat shakily.

“Why, of course he is devoted!” she answered, in a surprised way. “We haven’t been married long enough for him to be very husband-like yet!”

* When I return to Nantes
I’ll marry without delay;
 Gay, etc.
And the jailer’s pretty daughter
Shall be my wife that day.
 Gay, etc.

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As I look back at it now, fully understanding how much I cared for her, I wonder that I could have borne the shock so unflinchingly. I do not think the knowledge fully took possession of me at once, for I did not stagger under it or faint, weak as I still was. There was an almost imperceptible pause, then I said, with a poor attempt at gayety:

"You used to declare you were going to marry *me*, if I remember aright. But perhaps my memory received more than one twist in prison, which excuse, I observe, is convenient in glossing over your past."

She laughed merrily, but withal a little confusedly, I thought. "It is only you that have any need to gloss over the past," she said. "As for me, I admit that I always fully intended to marry you and nobody else from the time I can first remember. But you never seconded my good intentions. First it was Alix, poor, dear Alix! Then you were going to be a monk. Then it was I don't know who, I only know that you cannot expect a girl to wait forever for a man when he does not answer her letters nor pay her the slightest attention. I am like the wise man who had scratched his eyes out in a bramble-bush," she continued, gayly, "who

"When he found his eyes were out,
With all his might and main,
He jumped into another bush
And scratched them in again!"

"Yes," I cried, bitterly, not quite master of myself, for the blow was hard and I was not strong. "You would have been blind, indeed, to marry me, a peniless invalid, inglorious, and for a time disgraced! Colonel Moir, rich, successful, in high favor with the powers that be, is a match far more worthy of your bright eyes!"

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"Don't, Éric, don't!" she faltered. "Don't speak to me in that way! It doesn't sound like you. I don't like it."

"Excuse me, Étienne," I said, recovering myself as best I could. "You must overlook a little bitterness, for you have been very dear to me, and it is only now that for the first time I hear of your marriage. I was unprepared. You must not expect me to reconcile myself to it in a moment. But, believe me, I know you too well to think for an instant that you were governed by mercenary or unworthy motives in your choice."

There were tears in her eyes, and her voice shook a little as she replied, "Indeed, Rodéric, I may be vain and worldly and ambitious—you have always told me I was, and I suppose it must be so—but I would never have married Colonel Moir or any one else unless I truly thought at the time that I was in love with him."

"I know it, and I should wish it to be so," I replied, rising and smiling at her as kindly as I could. "I wish you to love your husband, and I wish you always to be loyal to him, even if for any reason the love should grow less. Sentiment does not always last, but duty is always there. I have a duty, too, and I shall try not to forget it. I shall not be the less your true friend always, Étienne, if I do not see you often now, for I shall return to Detroit with Pépé as soon as possible, and we may not meet again. So we had better say good-bye," and I held out my hand.

She laid hers in it with a firm, friendly clasp. I returned the pressure and instantly withdrew my hand. I flattered myself I was behaving very well. Then, with a parting good wish for my speedy convalescence, the sweet vision glided out of my sight.

I sank back on my couch and buried my face in the pillow, half choked by sobs. The only words that

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would come to me were those of the old love song that I had sung so merrily the day that I had fought my first duel for the little maiden that was forever lost to me. I was melancholy now, and the sad refrain of the last stanzas of "À la Claire Fontaine" were the ones that sprang to my trembling lips.

"" Chante, rossignol, chante,
Toi qui as le cœur gai!
Tu as le cœur à rire,—
Moi, je l'ai à pleurer!
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*

"" J'ai perdu ma maîtresse
Sous pouvoir la trouver,
Pour un bouquet de rose
Que je lui refusai!
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*

"" Je voudrais que la rose
Fût encore au rosier,
Et que le rosier même,
Fût dans la mer jeté!
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*""*

* O nightingale, sing on!
So gay and light of heart.
Your heart is full of joy,
But mine is full of tears!
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

For I have lost my loved one
Never to find her more!
And all for a luckless rose
Which I refused to pierce.
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

I would the unhappy rose
Still bloomed upon the bush;
And that the bush itself
Were cast into the sea!
*Long have I loved thee,
Ne'er can I forget thee !*

CHAPTER. XVI

WHEN I was alone and could think things over, I began to understand the depth and the strength of my disappointment. I began to understand that my whole heart was bound up in Étienne; that I had expected as a matter of course to marry her as soon as she should be grown up and I should be started in my profession; that to have her wrenched out of my life was like the bitterness of parting with life itself. I had worshipped Alix as some being of superior rank or angelic grace whom I could never aspire to win, but Nita I had always looked upon as my special property. She had always been fond of me—indeed, as a tiny child had been so passionately attached to me that she would leave mother or father or nurse to run to me. When she grew older, if she quarrelled with me it was only to make up and be better friends than ever. She had been ready to give her childish life for mine in a moment of danger. We had grown year by year more congenial, more companionable, and I had looked upon our affection as something foreordained, had relied upon its continuance, had foolishly counted upon it that the attachment of the child would develop into the love of the woman without effort on my part to cherish it or to win it. It had simply never entered my mind that she could ever possibly belong to any one else. Others might admire her, might make love to her, she might even seem to encourage

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them for a while, but I believed that her loyalty would be unshaken in its foundations, that she would be true to the end to him who had never spoken a word of love to her, never asked for her fidelity, never flattered her, never hidden from her what he considered to be her faults or shortcomings.

Her faults, did I say? She had none! She was perfect! What was a little vanity in one so pretty and with such faultless taste in dress? Had she not once gone an entire Lent without looking at her face in the glass because I had accused her of wasting time at her toilet? Had she not voluntarily denied herself a thousand little fineries because she feared her father might be indulging her beyond the point of prudence? Had I not often known her to refrain from spending her pin-money on ribbons and sweetmeats that she might give more towards some object of charity? I called her worldly because she was young and healthy and gay, and entered joyously into the pleasures of the world; but had I ever known her to sacrifice to the world one iota of Christian principle or girlish modesty, or had the world ever turned her from a single one of her accustomed duties of home or of religion? I called her ambitious because she had worked diligently to develop her rare talents and naturally liked to be where she could shine by her gifts and attainments; but who more ready to sacrifice herself for those she loved, who more ready to meet with a brave heart and cheery smile all the little annoyances, disappointments, and humiliations which even the most cherished darling of fortune must meet from time to time? Who so true, who so generous, who so trusty as this Nita that I loved, and she—oh, my God! she belonged now to another man, a man that I hated and who hated me, and by all that was holy and right I must

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never, never again think of her as one that might have belonged to me!

"J'ai perdu ma maîtresse
Sans pouvoir la trouver ;
Pour un bouquet de rose
Que je lui refusai !
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*

"Chante, rossignol, chante ;
Toi, qui as le cœur gai.
Tu as le cœur à rire ;
Moi, je l'ai à pleurer !
*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai !*"

"Confound it all!" muttered the honest doctor, in the intimacy of an after-dinner smoke by the side of my couch, "I needn't hold in before you, Chevalier, and before Rodéric. You both know my son-in-law as I do, and there is no need of my keeping it back. I do not like him, never did, and never shall. It is all the women's fault! I never should have consented to a marriage had I known in time how affairs were drifting. But you see how it was. While I was at the front, Nita and her mother were in New York, where they had few acquaintances. They missed terribly the gayety and the artistic atmosphere of Paris. Nita felt that her talents and accomplishments, her knowledge of European languages, literature, and politics were thrown away, that no one in New York cared for those things. Moir had much the same experience. He was deeply absorbed in his sugar speculations, but when his artistic nature sought companionship it was to Nita he turned for appreciation. They found each other more and more congenial, her mother knew nothing against him, her brothers and I were away. The first I knew of

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it was when my wife wrote me they were engaged, that Moir had an appointment in Washington, and wished to marry at once."

My grandfather and I sat in silence while the good doctor, between voluminous puffs of smoke, gave his apology for a state of affairs evidently unsatisfactory to him. We let him talk on without interruption, for what could we say? I knew well what the dearest wish of my grandfather's heart would have been, and that the recital was hardly less painful to him than to me.

"I opposed the marriage at first," went on the doctor, after waiting in vain for some comment from us. "Nita was very submissive. She was always an obedient, reasonable child. She wrote me that there wasn't a man in the world good enough for her to marry if I didn't approve of him. I don't think I could have written that way at her age. Of course, her submissiveness disarmed me, and then her mother wrote how congenial they were, what a fine, steady business man Moir had developed into, what a brilliant position Étienne would have, how her knowledge of languages and European politics would be appreciated in the diplomatic society in Washington, and I don't know what else. The upshot of it all was that I wrote back for the women to go ahead and have their own way, which they did."

Another awkward pause, for I could not speak, and my grandfather would not. "I don't say that I dislike him as an acquaintance," resumed the doctor at last. "He is clever and entertaining, and, I am told, a keen business man, which surprises me a little, as he seemed in Paris to be the unpractical, dreamy kind that they call artistic. But the point of view from which I dislike him is that of a husband for my little Étienne."

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I doubt if three persons could have been found more thoroughly in sympathy on any one point, and yet there was not so much as an answering murmur to the doctor's eloquent pause. At last he said, with a sigh: "I don't try to like him, and I can't try to make you like him. We all know too many things to his disadvantage."

My grandfather started up with energy. "Étienne must not be told them; she must have every chance for happiness," he said, impressively.

"Of course, Pépé, of course," I replied, smiling reassuringly at him.

"Of course, of course," muttered the doctor. "We must all hold our tongues for her sake, even if we have to go hang for it."

I think Dr. Chabert felt better after this outburst of confidence. He had seemed to feel that some sort of an apology was necessary to us because we knew so well his son-in-law's character, or perhaps because he suspected we had entertained secret hopes which were now blighted, and he did not wish us to think it was through any unfriendliness of his. I had no confidences with my grandfather, not feeling that I could entirely trust myself to talk things over. For his sake I wished to grow strong and appear cheerful, but at heart I was as weak, as morbid and melancholy as a love-sick girl. I seemed to be such a failure! I succeeded in nothing that I undertook. I had worshipped Alix, and she had never had as much as a thought for me. I loved Étiennette, and she had married another. I had wished to devote my life to God's service, and His minister had sent me back to a life in the world. I had started well in my profession and had to leave it at my country's call. I had done nothing in war but lose my freedom and my health, without benefiting my country. I

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had wished to sustain and comfort my grandfather in his old age, and I had been nothing to him but a heavy expense and untold anxiety. From every view-point I saw nothing in my life but mortification and disappointment, nothing in the future but loneliness, poverty, and ill-health.

But I was determined my grandfather should not suffer from my despondency. Though I did not confide in him, yet I talked openly and with as much gay unconcern as I could assume about the occurrences of the day, of my visit from the dashing young bride, of her pretty costume, of her good luck in having secured a rich husband who could gratify all her little vanities and ambitions. I spoke hopefully of the fortune I should make from my timber-lands in northern Michigan, and of how my health would come back to me in all its vigor in the freedom of a woodsman's life amid the exhilarating breezes from the Great Lakes. I was full of courage and bravado—for him ; but all the while the Chevalier would eye me narrowly and with a dissatisfied look. We could not deceive each other. The moment he was gay I relapsed into sadness, but as soon as I forced myself to appear gay then he fell into despondency.

I wish I might have avoided seeing Nita again, I wish I might have avoided meeting her husband, but it had to be. When I had recovered sufficiently to be able to travel, I called with my grandfather to bid her good-bye. Her husband was present, for it was their general reception-day, and I had to shake hands with him when I would rather have knocked him down. I had to talk and laugh unconcernedly with her when I would have liked to rush out into the open air and cry with pain.

"By-the-way, Éric," she said, hesitatingly, when we were alone for a moment, "there are two things I

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want so much to explain to you before you go away. They have been on my mind a long time. Truly, I was your loyal friend, and I do not think I could ever have liked any one who had knowingly done you an injury. I was very indignant at the way Mr. Arthur mismanaged your property, but there is one thing you must believe," and she looked up beseechingly into my face. "Colonel Moir was in Europe at the time, and he knew absolutely nothing of what Mr. Arthur was doing, and has never profited in any manner by your loss. On the contrary, had it been in his power, he would have done everything to restore you your property. He does not approve at all of his uncle's conduct."

"I know it," I said, lying unfalteringly for her sake. "I do not attach any blame to him for what has happened."

"And the other thing is this: I was almost certain for a while that the Selva Alegre sugar plantation out of which Colonel Moir made his fortune was yours. It seemed to be situated in the same district and to have so much the same history that, when I first heard Montgomerie, three years ago, speak of his intention of buying it and making a fortune in sugar out of it, I determined to put you on your guard. But I learned afterwards that I had done Colonel Moir an injustice by the thought. Your plantation was a coffee plantation and had an English name. I was so relieved."

"I am sorry you were ever uneasy about it," I said, kindly. "I had not understood your warning, and never thought of it again."

"I am so glad," she sighed. At this moment Moir joined us.

"We were sincerely pleased to have you justified and your good name cleared, Mr. Frémont," he said,

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with an air of great frankness and cordiality, "and I beg you will not thank me for any little service I may have done you in the matter"—(I had not attempted to thank him). "You were most welcome, I am sure, for old friendship's sake. Indeed, I was inclined from the first to believe your officer's story a fabrication. But still, boys will be boys, and without breach of confidence I may say that there were little episodes—eh?—connected with boyish days in France—eh?"—here he laughed with insolent familiarity—"that seemed to lend color to some of his assertions—eh?"

I could not speak for indignation. How dared he, before his wife, make any insinuations about me, when he knew the things that I had it in my power to disclose about himself? If they were to have hanged me on the spot I would have scorned to say a word in defence of my innocence. I was white with anger, but I opened not my mouth. Let them think it cowardice or guilt, I cared not. Nita, too, was white. She looked at neither one nor the other, but straight before her. Moir laughed heartily, as if he had perpetrated some good joke.

"By-the-way, Frémont, let me congratulate you on your good luck, or good management, whichever you may call it," said a Boston gentleman who was present, sauntering up to our unhappy group. "I hear that it is the old Frémont plantation from which such a fortune has been made in sugar. You are fortunate in having Mr. Arthur and Colonel Moir as your business partners. Some of us old hands in the stock market have not got over our amazement yet at the way you cornered us on sugar in '61."

"I am sorry I cannot claim your congratulation, Mr. Breed," I said, "but unfortunately the Frémont plantation was a *cafetal*, not an *ingenio*, and it was

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ruined during an insurrection and sold for debt some years ago."

"Oh, come, come!" laughed Mr. Breed. "Don't disclaim it! We are business men, and Mrs. Moir, here, is the wife of a business man, and we understand all these little bankruptcy transactions. I knew Arthur well at the time he was managing that property for you. He borrowed a lot of money in Boston, with your estate as security, and turned the coffee farm into a sugar plantation. By the time it was completely transformed the mortgage had to be renewed, Arthur declared your estate bankrupt, the mortgage was foreclosed, and the whole estate and plant were bid in for a nominal sum by a third party. Of course we all knew what that meant, and that it was Moir bidding for you under his own name. It was cleverly done. Don't disclaim it, Mr. Frémont! As I say, we all know how those little things are arranged!"

I dared not look at Étienne. Moir's lips were twitching nervously, but he had himself well in hand. "There is a little confusion here, Mr. Breed," he said, quietly. "You are mixing up two transactions."

"I think I ought to know if any one should," interrupted I, looking steadily at Moir. "You have confused two separate transactions, Mr. Breed, as Colonel Moir is about to explain. He purchased the Selva Alegre sugar plantation in 1861. The Frémont coffee plantation—which, by-the-way, had an English name—was sold as far back as 1856, if I remember rightly."

A quick, short sigh of relief from Étienne rewarded my bold invention. The color had crept back into her face and she smiled gratefully at me, but Mr. Breed was not so easily satisfied.

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"It is strange I should have made such a mistake," he exclaimed. "I should like to be satisfied on this point. I was the broker through whom the first loan was transacted, just ten years ago, in 1854, and I am perfectly positive that the Frémont plantation was the one concerned. Here is some one that can tell me," he broke off, eagerly, as my grandfather drew near. I tried to make him a sign, but failed to catch his eye. "The Chevalier de Macarty will surely be able to help me out."

My grandfather bowed courteously. "I am at your service, sir."

"Can you tell me, Chevalier, at what date the Frémont plantation in Cuba was sold?"

"Just at the outbreak of the war, I think," replied the old man, cautiously. "My only authority is the account which Mr. Arthur handed in to the probate court when my grandson attained his majority in 1861. The Cuban estate had been mortgaged to convert it into a sugar plantation, but Mr. Arthur was forced to declare the estate bankrupt just as it was beginning to be profitable, and the mortgage was foreclosed."

"Just as I thought! And who bought it?" cried Mr. Breed, triumphantly.

"The purchaser's name was immaterial; I never inquired," replied the Chevalier.

"One more thing, Chevalier. Will you be good enough to tell me the Spanish name of the plantation?"

"I believe it had a Spanish name in a former generation," explained my grandfather, "but of that I have no remembrance. While it was held by the Frémont family it bore the English name of Blithewood."

Blithewood! Blithe is the equivalent of gay,

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merry, and "Merry Wood," literally rendered into Spanish, is *Selva Alegre*.

But Mr. Breed had no knowledge of the Castilian tongue. The English name only puzzled him and threw him completely off the track. "Strange," he muttered, "that there should be two cases so much alike, dates and all! It is no wonder I confused them."

"No wonder, indeed," said Moir, carelessly. "Pray do not apologize. It was a very natural mistake."

But I knew that Étienne understood Spanish, and one glance at her white face and quivering lips showed me that she saw there was no mistake, that she comprehended it all.

"You see, Mr. Breed," I said, impressively, speaking to him, but looking straight at Nita, "that whatever has transpired has been in the line of legitimate business. I have nothing to disclaim and nothing to regret. I am no longer the owner or the part owner of the Frémont plantation; but had I retained it I should not have made a fortune from it, as I have neither the business talent nor the capital to manage such an estate. It has but melancholy associations for me and mine, and I have no shadow of regret at its passing from our hands. Whoever may be its present owners, I hope it will bring them a fortune and a happiness that never could have been mine."

And with these words I passed from the presence of the man I hated and the woman I loved.

CHAPTER XVII

IN the four years succeeding the Civil War, Michigan had begun to enter upon her wonderful career of development. These were great days for the engineers, both civil and mining, and nothing could have helped me more to recover my health and spirits than the constant activity and out-of-door life required by my profession. I threw myself into my work with enthusiasm, and was lucky in being constantly employed. Copper and iron mines were being opened, railroads built, lumber districts surveyed, and, what most concerned me—for marine engineering was my specialty—the United States government was erecting light-houses and life-saving stations, building canals and locks, and dredging deep water-ways, while the great freight companies were constructing immense docks, piers, and bridges necessary to the marvellous increase in the commerce of the lakes. It is true that my plans were not always accepted by the authorities, who complained that I provided for a greater commerce and for vessels of a larger draught than anything warranted us to expect in lake traffic ; but in a generation that has passed I have seen to my satisfaction that the development of commerce has even surpassed my dreams, that in rejecting my plans and accepting those of lesser magnitude they have entailed upon their successors the work of rebuilding, enlarging, deepening, until I have been more than justified.

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Yet perhaps they were wise in building for their day only. They have thus shared the expense with a morrow which was better able to bear it, and they have provided work for a generation of engineers to come.

But it was in lumber that the most marvellous fortunes were being made. That industry did not require the outlay of money or skill, or the long delay in returns that made speculation in mines and manufactures so costly and uncertain. Timberlands could be bought for a song. Were they but near a natural water-way, all that was needed was a few rude tools, unskilled labor, a little energy, and the returns were immediate. The fortunate owner of a few hundreds of dollars who could prospect the land and hire labor became a millionaire in two or three seasons. My heart leaped at the possibilities. At first I had not even the few hundreds necessary, for my grandfather had been obliged to use up the little capital remaining from the sale of the orchard in his long search for me. But in two or three years I had more than made it up. We needed little ready money, for the farm paid its own expenses and supplied our few wants. We heeded not shabby furniture, and our table was better than that of many a millionaire, for we had old French Kate to cook for us, and was not our farm the pride of our half-breed farmer's heart? Who had finer poultry, cows, fruit, or vegetables than we? And were there not inexhaustible supplies of fish, frogs, and game within twenty miles of Detroit for any who had rod, spear, or gun? I worked hard at my profession, but I always found time to catch whitefish off Belle Isle, or shoot a brace of wild ducks at the Sainte-Claire Flats, and were there not idle French boys in plenty to supply us with anything that could be trapped or shot,

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in Wayne or Oakland counties, in exchange for a jug of cider or a pound of cheese? We had little use, as I said, for ready money; I was well and regularly paid for my engineering work, and I was the owner of a vast tract of fine timber-lands on the shores of Lake Michigan. Why, then, should not I, too, become a millionaire lumberman?

The day came when the Chevalier and I set off in the best of spirits to survey my forest primeval. I was employed by the United States government to design a light-house and breakwater on a sand-bar at the entrance to a harbor on Lake Michigan. Many wrecks had occurred there, and the slight wooden structure that had served for a light-house hitherto had been swept away in the heavy waves and crushing ice of a spring storm. My lands lay along the same stretch of coast. Major Haliburton was then visiting us for a few weeks, and we invited him to accompany us. This invitation he accepted with great pleasure, for the pioneer spirit was strong in him, and he declared that he could give points on trees to the best lumbermen in Michigan, and would make my fortune for me. He declared himself glad also of the opportunity to see the upper lakes with one who knew so much of their history as I.

No railroad then existed, as now, which would convey us from Detroit to our destination in four or five hours, but that would have been a sadly unromantic way of progressing. Partly to see the lakes, partly to avoid the fatigue of much wagon-travel, we took the large side-wheel steamer *Northern Light*, plying between Toledo and Chicago by the Strait of Mackinac. Every foot of our way was consecrated by the history and romance of French exploration and Indian warfare, and the heroic labors of martyred missionaries. We left Detroit and Lake Sainte-

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Claire behind us, threaded our way through the shallow, prettily wooded banks of the Sainte-Claire River, past Fort Gratiot, constructed for the protection of French fur-traders by Du Lhut in 1688. Opposite each other, at the entrance of the river, stood the small freight-handling railroad towns of Port Huron and Sarnia, one guardian of American, the other of British interests. Out into Lake Huron we swept, lost for a while to sight of land in this glorious fresh-water ocean, with its heaven-clear depths. Then we neared shore, rounded the picturesque Pointe aux Barques, lonely and grand, as it brooded over its past history of romance and sacrifice. Into vast Saginaw Bay we steamed, visiting the brand-new sawdust village bearing the pretentious name of Bay City, then out of sight of land again for half a day, towards night touching at another straggling sawdust village—Alpena. Everywhere sawdust, rafts of logs, barren hill-sides with unsightly stumps, and busy, screeching saw-mills told the story of Nature robbed of her wealth by the brigand hand of man.

In the night we passed by the outlet of picturesque Georgian Bay, with its thirty thousand islands and its inexhaustible treasures of fish and lumber. Through its waters the explorers first reached the Great Lakes, and at its lower extremity the settlement of Penetanguishene marked the first mission on the lakes and the martyrdom of Brébœuf and Lallemant in 1649.

It was early dawn when we steamed in sight of the regal isle of Mackinac. Michilimackinac! Paradise of the Northwest! with your forest-crowned cliffs, your beaches and nestling villages, and the little white fort, with its history of two hundred and fifty years of struggle with red foe and white foe,

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Indian, French, or British, writ in blood and tears. What do you not tell us, as you stand there in your isolation, ten miles from land, guarding the waterways of four great lakes—Huron, Georgian Bay, Michigan, Superior? Of strength and heroism, of Cross and Sword, of martyrdom and massacre; of Indian friend and British foe, of French friend and Indian foe; of undaunted explorer, of energetic trader, of saintly missionary; of courage, fortitude, and piety; of greed, treachery, and crime—of all these things is your history writ in the past. And to-day? To-day you smile on the sweep of peaceful commerce, for the Northwest has unlocked the treasures of her mines and her forests, her corn-fields, her flocks and herds, her orchards and gardens, and it is your watch, Sentinel of the Lakes, that has guarded for the benefit of her children the fruit of the labors, the sufferings, the tragedies of their forefathers. To-day the fortune-favored children of the Northwest come gayly trooping to your shores to while away a summer holiday. In the shade of your deep woods, or the sunshine of your fields and cliffs, fanned by the breezes of the four lakes, listening to the ripple of the water on the smooth sand-beaches that fringe your shores, or gazing at the matchless views of lake and bay, of islands and continent, of rock and forest, they pay homage to your beauty and healthfulness, indeed; but they are of newer races and traditions, ignorant of your history, heedless of its lessons.

To the northward of us, westward leading, were the rapids of the Sault Sainte-Marie, and alongside of them the great canals and locks by which the mineral wealth of the upper peninsula of Michigan and the commerce of Lake Superior were conveyed to the waters of the lower lakes. My interest was

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not in copper-mines or iron-ore, and our course lay southerly, through the Strait of Mackinac, past St. Ignace, scene of the heroic labors and last resting-place of Père Marquette, to Lake Michigan, the "Lac des Illinois" of the French explorers. A short passage took us back as it were into the historic past, for around the corner of Little Traverse Bay our steamer ploughed her way up the deep, narrow, forest-enclosed channel of Harbor Springs, where an ancient Franciscan mission still stood between an encampment of Ottawa Indians and a modern sawdust village. There we could yet see the fathers, in their brown serge robes and sandalled feet, as their predecessors had been two centuries before when they first crossed from Georgian Bay in their frail canoes. The mission church, a plain, white, frame structure, stood beside the long, low, barrack-like monastery and the buildings of the manual-training school, where the monks instructed nearly two hundred Indian boys in carpentering, printing, baking, and harness-making. Across the square from the monastery was the convent of the gentle-faced, brown-robed Franciscan Sisters, with their day-school for the white children of the village, and a large industrial and boarding school for Indian girls, who were instructed in sewing and embroidery, cooking and laundry work. Here, in the silence of forest and lake, the quiet work of the moral and industrial training of the Indian had been going on for generations. It seemed an ideal solution of the vexed question of the civilization of the race, but the monk to whom I said this shook his head.

"We have every reason to be satisfied from the spiritual point of view," he said. "Our Indians are moral, sober, and so honest that no one in the town ever locks his door or hides his purse from an Indian.

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But from the industrial point of view there is little to encourage us. They learn quickly, they are marvellously clever at their trades ; but they are children of the forest and have no love for shop or factory or kitchen. As soon as they leave school they seek the woods and the wild, free life of the camp. Their hardships are as nothing to them compared to the hardship of the confinement and close air of a town. They keep their innocence and faith, but they quickly and gladly lose their instruction in civilized arts."

And I, for one, did not blame them, as I looked towards the Indian encampments dotting the shores of Little Traverse Bay, and saw how Nature had favored that lovely spot. Who would leave its wooded slopes, its dark interior forests stocked with game, its little gems of inland lakes, teeming with fish, the tonic-laden air, the song of innumerable birds, the brilliant atmosphere, the glorious fresh sea—who that was a free agent would willingly leave this for the whirring machinery, the screeching mills, the confined tenements, and tainted air of a manufacturing town?

The only other settlement in the silent bay was the little fishing and trading village at Petoskey, perhaps a hundred souls in all. We steamed past lonely Charlevoix Point into the wide waters of Lake Michigan, so deeply, marvellously blue, gleaming in the sun like a huge sapphire. Not a sail was to be seen, or a break in the boundless sweep of horizon. The shades of night overtook us as we arrived at another logging town, about six miles to the northward of our final destination. Wishing to avoid the discomforts of a logger's hotel for my grandfather, I drove over to the little Dutch town of Delft, where we had engaged rooms at the house of one of its principal citizens, a builder and contractor who had

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done some excellent work for the Lake Survey Office. The following day he conducted me to the scene of my future operations.

The town was situated, as are many towns on the coast of Lake Michigan, at the end of a pretty inland lake or bay some five or six miles long by a mile and a half in width, fed by springs and trout-streams. This inner lake emptied itself through a short, narrow, winding channel into the waters of Lake Michigan. Of great depth, free from obstructions, and sheltered from storms, the inner lake or bay made a perfect harbor for vessels of the largest size. The town at the inner extremity of the bay was the centre of a fertile agricultural district, one of the richest fruit-growing regions of the country. It was also a fine lumber district, and many of the Dutch settlers were engaged in boat-building. With a railroad to bring it into communication with the farms and orchards of the region, with a deep enough channel to allow the regular lake steamers to enter the bay with safety, the town might have a great future before it. Naturally my first thought was for the channel. We passed through it in a small steam-launch, and as we emerged into Lake Michigan I took in at a glance the whole difficulty of the situation. Great sand-bars lay on either side the channel's mouth, stretching out into the large lake for nearly a mile. The sand often shifted with the heavy winter storms and ice-drifts, till at times the mouth of the channel was almost completely blocked. A long, canted, wooden pier ran out into the lake for some distance, and the former light-house, a frail wooden structure, had been built on piles at the end. The great ice-floes beating against it had completely destroyed the foundation and wrecked the building, and the sands showed us where storm-driven vessels, seek-

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ing a refuge, had lost the channel and been ground to pieces on the treacherous bars.

For miles in either direction, as far as eye could see, the shore was bold and picturesque, the sand-cliffs rising in abrupt, sharp-pointed hills to a height of two and three hundred feet, with serrated outlines, like mountain-peaks. To the north of the Delft channel the sand-hills had been almost completely denuded of trees, but to the south lay a magnificent stretch of timber-land, a forest primeval of stately pines, giant oaks and walnuts, and fragrant hemlocks. There was little or no undergrowth of brush, pretty streams coursed through the ravines, and the trees had advanced their front boldly to the very edge of the wide strip of smooth sand-beach, on which the long rollers broke three deep, and the surf sounded unceasingly with a peculiar, long-drawn sound, like the scraping of a violin, as the foam retired from the so-called "singing sands."

And all this was mine—mine to do with as I would. Those stately monarchs must stand or fall at my command! There lay the wealth that was to buy us back the orchard on the banks of le Détroit and restore to my grandfather the home of his youth!

But for many days I had no time to think of this. My grandfather and Major Haliburton could go over my lands and devise plans for the best methods of clearing it and of turning its resources to account, but my first duty was to solve the problem which the government had put before me of facilitating navigation along this shore. With all the earnestness of my nature I threw myself into the question of conquering the combined forces of wind, waves, and still more destructive ice, to design light-house, break-water, and life-saving station, to deepen and straighten the shifty channel, and open the beautiful land-

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locked harbor to the commerce of the lakes. The safety of innumerable seamen, the future of a promising town, the interests of a vast agricultural district, depended upon the accomplishment of this design. It was work that I loved from my soul, and I devoted myself to it with all the intelligence and energy at my command. For the water was my element. To construct a light-house many miles out at sea, contending against the winds and the waves, with our ingenuity taxed to the utmost, life and limb in peril, and witnessing daily scenes of heroism on every hand—this was worth while. It stirred the blood, it gave us faith in manhood, it brought out the highest and best in all—the leadership of the general, the blind obedience of the soldier, the intelligence and resourcefulness of the constructor, the innate nobility of the sons of toil. We, who had once done this work in deep water, forever after scorned the safety and shelter of inland construction.

But at last I had time to turn to the consideration of my own prospects and carefully to survey and reconnoitre my lands. It was a perfect day in early June when my grandfather, Major Haliburton, and I climbed up from the beach to the crest of one of the highest of the wooded hills. The crisp, fresh, westerly breeze from the boundless lake stirred the forest leaves. In the dark ravine below us we could hear the hooting of owls from tree-top to tree-top, but overhead the birds were singing in the gay sunshine, and the warmth coaxed out the delicious aroma of balsam-fir and hemlock.

The Ohioan fell to measuring the trees with an eye to business. "They tell me the bay freezes over three feet solid o' ice in midwinter," he remarked. "They can fetch out the biggest kind o' teams for

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haulin' timber over it. Lumberin' hereabouts is as easy as rollin' off a log."

The Chevalier and I seated ourselves at the foot of a noble walnut, and gazed in silence at the beautiful scene about us, lake and forest, beach and woodland stream, the brilliant sky, the life-giving air, the roar of the surf, the song of the birds, the murmur of the tree-tops. A glad, exultant sense of proprietorship came over me. These were *my* trees! I looked around at the majestic creatures—strong young saplings, perhaps, when they watched from their hill-tops, two centuries before, the little fleet of canoes which bore the intrepid Robert Cavelier de la Salle over the glittering waters of the "Lac des Illinois" on his way to the Father of the Waters in that marvellous voyage of discovery from the St. Lawrence, through the length of the Mississippi, to the salt waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Earlier yet they had witnessed the voyages of the saintly Marquette and his devoted band of Indians. How much of romance and adventure had passed before them, while they stood there, calm and strong in their ancient beauty! How much of unwritten history they might unfold to us! Who knows what they were crooning to us, even now, in the sweetest music of Nature, as they swayed rhythmically before the caressing breezes laden with messages from the sparkling lake?

In contrast to all this ancient nobility and ever-youthful vitality I recalled the denuded hill-sides and blackened stumps, the bare, tossing booms of logs, the busy, screeching sawmills, the squalid sawdust towns, and all the unlovely associations of lumber-yard and loggers' camp. The thought of this wanton destruction, the barbarous massacre of Nature's kings, made me sick at heart. No wealth this traffic could bring would induce me to consent

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to such desecration had I only my own interests to consult. But my grandfather had sacrificed for me much that was dear and sacred to him in nature. For his sake I must not draw back, I must sign the death-warrant of majesty, though it tore my heart's tenderest chords.

The Ohioan paused in his work. The spell of the scene appeared to have fallen on his spirit and diminished its ardor. "Seems kinder too bad, don't it?" he remarked, though he did not specify what he had reference to.

I rose and wound my arms around the nearest pine-tree, a superb, towering creature. I stroked its rough bark with loving hands, leaned my brow sadly against its massive trunk. Suddenly my grandfather lifted his head and spoke. He had not looked at me, yet he seemed to have seen into my soul.

"Rodéric," he said. "We do not lack food nor drink!"

"No, Pépé," I answered.

"Nor clothing, nor comfortable shelter!"

"No, Pépé," I replied again.

"And we have each other!"

"Yes, yes, dear Pépé!"

"Then," said the Chevalier, with decision—"then, lad, let that suffice us! Let the old trees stand!"

CHAPTER XVIII

“A PAIR of sentimental fools!” was all the neighborly comment that Dr. Chabert had to make when we returned to Hamtramck, without having embarked in the lumber business.

“Let the lad alone,” said Major Haliburton, with a certain solemnity. “He knows what he’s about. He has the spirit of the Free-monts, that is always for doin’ high, grand things and can’t stoop to nothing unkind or ignoble. Nature is a mighty mother, and we shouldn’t do her no hurt but where the law o’ necessity obliges, and then Nature herself is generous and gives us poor, sinful men all she has. I kind o’ understand myself how Robert feels. I never did kill a deer or cut down a healthy tree without a sneakin’ sense o’ bein’ guilty o’ murder.”

The Chevalier and I had felt as if we owed the major an apology for having taken him on a wild-goose chase, as it were, but he fully understood our sentiment, and almost persuaded us that he would have been unhappy had we taken any other course. Such was his idolatry of the name of Frémont that I might have committed the wildest eccentricities, and he would always have seen in them a mark of nobility. It was a new thing to me to have such tribute paid to my paternal inheritances. Hitherto my virtues had been ascribed to the blood of the Macartys, and the Frémonts had received scant notice save when I gave evidence of some disagree-

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able trait of character, when the Chevalier was wont to declare that I had it direct from my grandfather Frémont and his Spanish consort.

We had returned to find Dr. Chabert in a very perturbed frame of mind. He had been thrown from his horse lately and was still confined to his bed, and had to submit to the ministrations of his wife and an old French nurse, which fretted him beyond bounds. His sons were both absent from home—Rémy, now a surgeon in the regular army, being stationed on the far Western frontier, and Frank studying for the priesthood in Mount St. Mary's Seminary at Cincinnati. Étienne he had rarely heard from of late.

"I wish I didn't worry about her so," he complained. "She was so quiet and still the last time I saw her in New York that it has haunted me ever since. She is never so silent as when she has something serious to say. I couldn't ask for her confidence, for she didn't volunteer it, and now that she is a married woman I haven't the same right to speak to her that I had before."

"Is Colonel Moir still absorbed in his speculations?" I asked, for I knew that he had given up his position in the commissary and settled in New York to devote himself to his business interests.

"Yes, it is business, and nothing but business, morning, noon, and night, till he is as thin as a rail. Still you can't say that he neglects her for it. Sometimes I think she would be happier if he let her have more to do, a little more housekeeping and shopping, and things that women like. But he goes to the markets himself and provides everything and gives the orders to the cook. He even buys Étienne's dresses and laces and gloves, and a thousand things that she would like to fuss over herself. It is

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none of my business, and I must not interfere between husband and wife, but I should like to make some suggestions, all the same."

"What she needs to fuss over is children," said the Chevalier, bluntly.

"I think that weighs on her mind, too," said the doctor, sadly. "She has been disappointed twice and was at death's door, first from a fall on the stairs, and lately from a carriage accident. She should have known better than to mount one of those big coaches. I always expect them to upset. But her husband was driving, and of course she was goose enough to think nothing could happen when he was handling the ribbons. Besides, coaching and the theatre are the only amusements that he indulges in, and she is always ready to sacrifice herself for his pleasures."

Two days later I was about to start for Washington on business of the Lake Survey Office, when an urgent call from Dr. Chabert brought me to his bedside. He was in great grief, as I could see at once, and handed me a letter to read. It was from Montgomerie Moir, written evidently in the deepest distress and agitation, saying that he was no longer able to conceal from them that Étienne's mind was affected, and that steps must be taken immediately to place her in an asylum.

I had never seen the doctor so completely broken down, not even at Alix's death. He did not seem able to reconcile himself to the blow.

"I cannot believe it!" he cried, over and over again. "I cannot believe it! The doctors must be mistaken! There is no such thing in the family far or near, and she is too healthy mentally and physically to be unbalanced by any of the ordinary troubles or illnesses of life. Oh, why am I chained to this miserable bed

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when my child needs me as she never did before? My poor little Nita! with not even one of her brothers to go to her; and her mother, though I say it that shouldn't, not the one to do her any good."

This was true enough, though the doctor had been too loyal ever to let such words drop before. But Mrs. Chabert, though headstrong enough about little things, was singularly helpless and inefficient in any emergency.

"Rodéric, you have been almost like a brother to her, almost like a son to me, can you not see her once for me and report how she is? Consult the most eminent specialists in New York or Philadelphia—spare no pains, no expense! Don't let them be in haste. Confound my leg! Oh, my little Nita! my little Nita!"

I promised everything, for this was no time to think of myself. I lost not a moment in setting out on my journey, and my haste had a soothing effect on the poor, anxious father. I could not share his hope, however, that there was a mistake. Had he not two days before admitted that she was low-spirited and silent, unlike her buoyant, talkative self? He had feared something, but not this—oh, not this! Yet did it not seem prophetic in the light of what we now knew?

The moment I arrived in New York I went immediately to consult a specialist on mental diseases, to whom I had been sent with a letter from Dr. Chabert.

"I am particularly glad to see you, Mr. Frémont," he said. "Colonel Moir has spoken to me about his wife's mental condition, and I have seen her two or three times without her suspecting my object, but it is well that she should be seen by some old friend of the family. Dr. Chabert tells me you have known his daughter since her infancy. Do you know Colo-

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nel Moir well, also?" And the physician looked keenly at me as he spoke.

"I have known him off and on for ten years," I replied, "but we are not on the best of terms, owing to some business misunderstandings. However, there is no actual breach, and he will not refuse to receive me."

"If you drop in upon them about one o'clock, they would probably ask you to take lunch with them."

"I should suppose so."

"Very well. Then call there within an hour. I shall be lunching at Dr. Netley's, in the same block with Colonel Moir's residence, and you might join me there after you have made your visit. I shall be interested to know how she appears to you."

"Do you think there is any hope that it is a mistake—that it may be a merely temporary affection of some kind?" I faltered. "It seems so impossible to think of any cloud on her bright intellect! She was always so clear-headed and sensible, so reasonable and self-controlled."

"I do not care to give an opinion at present," said the eminent man, warily. "I particularly wish to have you receive an unbiased impression. My opinion is formed, but the case is interesting and peculiar. By-the-way, I would not let Mrs. Moir know that her father sent you. Let her think your visit friendly and accidental."

I do not know that I have ever been more agitated than during the few moments after I was admitted within the brown-stone mansion on Fifth Avenue, and awaited in the drawing-room the coming of its mistress. I do not know what melancholy vision I was expecting when the door flew open and Étienne was there, with both hands outstretched in eager greeting, her dark eyes shining with true, cordial

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friendship, a radiant smile on her sweet mouth, her cheeks glowing with color. She was the same little Étienne—oh, thank God! the same in health, in truth, in brightness and sweetness! I gasped so with joy that I could not speak straight. I do not know what I said; I only know that in my happiness I took her in my arms and kissed her with all the hearty affection I used when she was a little romping girl and I was her big, teasing, school-boy comrade.

"Oh, Nita, I forgot!" I exclaimed, in consternation, letting her go. "I suppose it isn't proper now! You mustn't look so young, you witch! How should I remember that you are a day over fifteen?"

"Indeed, Rodéric, you never kissed me when I was fifteen! Your memory must go further back than that for any such thing. But I cannot scold you, because I am so glad to see you looking brown and well again, so glad to have you come and see me as you used to do in the old days. But have you really come just in friendship, or have you any news to bring me? Have you found your bramble-bush, eh?" with a merry laugh and a sly glance.

"No bad news, at any rate," I rejoined. "I came because all the Detroit girls wished me to bring them the latest fashions from New York. Jump up, Nita, and let me look at you. My conscience! What do you call that kind of balloon-jib rig astern? The Wolverines haven't learned that cut of sail yet."

"Nonsense, Rodéric! Every girl in New York has been wearing overskirts and bustles for years!"

"Well, I have only been in New York for two hours. You are the first girl I have seen."

"Only two hours? And you came here so soon? Then I fear it is bad news," she said, in a startled way. "Did you come direct from home? Is papa well?"

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"He is well enough, except for a broken leg or two, that keeps him in a state of mortal sin, swearing from dawn of one day till sunrise of the next. Your mother and Fanchette are nursing him."

"That explains it," she said, so soberly that I burst out laughing. "I don't mean their nursing, you disrespectful boy! I mean that Colonel Moir said he had written to papa to come on and make us a visit, and we should have had a reply yesterday or to-day, but none has come. Perhaps you are the reply?"

I remembered the doctor's injunction, and said, evasively: "Why will not you believe that I came out of pure friendliness? Truly, Nita, I did not know that your father had been asked to visit you, and he sent no reply by me. But perhaps you will observe that I turned up at your luncheon hour and take a hint from that."

"I—yes, of course, oh yes," she said, hurriedly and confusedly; "of course you will lunch with us. I expect Montgomerie every moment, and the butler was to tell him you were here. He will invite you formally as soon as he comes." Her confused manner was so unlike Etienne's ready grace that I looked at her a little more closely, and with a strange sensation of pity in my heart. During the past few minutes the rich color that was in her face when she greeted me had slowly faded away and given place to a waxen paleness. A shade of melancholy settled over the fine, dark eyes. All her bright vivacity was gone. My heart sank within me, for I began to fear what her altered looks and ways might indicate.

"Have I put my foot in it again, Nita?" I asked, gently. "Remember I am only a country boy, and not used to New York ways. Should I have called on Colonel Moir first?"

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Suddenly a formidable-looking butler stood before us, though I had heard no footstep. He delivered a very elaborate message from Colonel Moir, who had returned home and would join us presently, and hoped that Mr. Frémont would stop to luncheon.

A more uncomfortable meal I never ate. Moir must have guessed my errand, especially after I had referred to Dr. Chabert's accident, and he looked troubled and absent-minded. My heart softened towards him, for it was evident that anxiety had told deeply on him. He was thin and worn and hollow-eyed, his appetite had left him, and he pushed away his plate untouched. Nita hardly ate more than he, but she talked incessantly, trying first one subject, then another, in a vain effort to make the meal more cheerful. Certainly that bright intellect was not impaired, for she spoke with excellent judgment and keen penetration of affairs political, social, dramatic, of current literature and art. Fortunately I was able to respond to some of her efforts, for Detroit was well advanced for a city of its size, and all the leading dramatic and operatic companies of the past season had visited us. I had heard the principal musical stars; I had read the two popular novels of the hour, *The Moonstone* and *The Last Chronicles of Barset*. I had even seen the stories of that new and original genius of the Far West, Bret Harte. I did my best to keep up my end of the conversation, but Moir never joined in, except two or three times to contradict his wife flatly and snub her so cruelly that had I not felt compassion for him in his great anxiety I should have pleaded another engagement and left the table. To my surprise, Étienne was very subdued and submissive under his rude treatment. She tried to laugh it off, but she was white about the lips, and there was a half-frightened look in her eyes, very dif-

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ferent from the fearless, saucy Étienne of other days.

We lingered long over that unhappy lunch-table, till suddenly Moir arose, pushed his chair half across the room, and beckoned me to follow him. I saw Étienne turn deadly pale, gasp, and glance agonizedly towards me, but she said not a word. Poor child! Doubtless she knew that our conversation was to be about her and her mental condition, for her husband's anxiety was so uncontrolled, so absurdly, painfully evident, that she could not be ignorant of his suspicions. I tried to smile cheerfully and reassuringly at her, but she only turned her head sadly away.

"My study is at the top of the house," said Moir, leading the way. "We can talk better there."

I followed him up past the drawing-room floor, past the bedroom floor, to the upper story, where the large front room, the width of the house, was cosily and luxuriously furnished with everything supposed to be indispensable to manly comfort. He signed to me to enter first. I walked towards the centre-table to turn over some curious pipes, for I thought he would ask me to smoke. He entered after me and closed the door; I heard the key turn in the lock, and, looking around quickly, saw him thrust it in his pocket, and advance towards me with fixed, glittering eyes.

I do not know why I had no sensation of fear. I was only conscious of intense but perfectly quiet and repressed excitement.

He came up to me and seized my wrists in a grip of iron. "Hold up your right hand to heaven!" he hissed, "and swear to God you will not reveal a word of what I am going to say to you!"

I promptly perjured myself.

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"My life is in danger!" he almost screamed. "She is trying to poison me. I dare not touch food at her table. She is crazy! She must be sent to an asylum! She tells the doctors it is I that am crazy. She would like to lock me up and have my money. She bribes my valet to spy on me. She has spies in the opposite house now. Do you not see them? They have drawn their curtains, but they are hiding there behind them. Did you not see that she had the shade drawn exactly half-way in the dining-room? That is one of her signals to the spies. She thinks it is I that am crazy, but, before God, I swear it is she! it is she!"

I had no need to listen to his incoherent speech, I had no need to look into his terrified, haggard countenance and wild, burning eyes, I had no need to feel his iron grip on my wrists, to know that I was locked in a room alone with a madman!

CHAPTER XIX

I REMEMBER wondering what it would feel like to be in the free open air again, in no man's power, and well out of this disagreeable scrape. It was all so clear to me now that we seemed blind not to have known from the first the true state of affairs. I had no experience with the insane, but it appeared to me best to avoid a struggle or a trial of physical strength, and to sympathize with his illusions or gradually divert his mind from them, as one would that of a child. Fortunately he seemed at the moment to have no feeling of personal antipathy for me, but I could not tell how long this would last. He still held my wrists uncomfortably tight, and I dared not complain. I expressed surprise and interest in what he told me, but he did not stop to listen.

"There was a carriage in waiting at the end of the block when I came in. The door was half open, and there was no one inside. It is waiting for me!" he shouted. "For me! They want to take me off! They believe what she says, but they are all deceived." Suddenly his voice dropped to a whisper, and he began to push me towards the window. "See there! The carriage has moved! It has crossed to the opposite side of the street. What does that mean?"

I did not resist him, but, though I did not wish to appear afraid of him, yet I could hardly be said to relish the idea of standing at a fifth-story window with a lunatic who had tight hold of me and might

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take it into his head at any moment to pitch me out into the street below

"Is it another signal?" I suggested, mysteriously. "Do they know we are together here?"

He looked troubled, and to my immense relief dropped my hands and stepped back a pace or two. "They must not see me," he said, over and over again. "I have written to her father and told him the true state of the case," he muttered, after a pause. "Perhaps he has sent the carriage to take *her* to the asylum."

"Yes, yes," I assented. "Dr. Hude's asylum."

He started a little. "Dr. Hude knows she is crazy, for I have told him all about it. We will drive her there now before her spies know what we are doing." Then he paused and looked around suspiciously. "I am afraid of them," he said, trembling. "Suppose the coachman should be a spy, and should take me off instead of her?"

"I might take her to the doctor's," I suggested, "and you stay here safely till I return."

It was absurd to suppose that he would consent to anything so simple and obvious, but in his distorted frame of mind he did not see what was plainly my motive. He caught at the idea with a sigh of relief, and began to fumble in his pocket for the key.

"They will not know you," he said, eagerly. "You can do it. She will not suspect, and she will go with you anywhere." With some difficulty he fitted the key to the lock and opened the door. I should have liked to spring through to outside freedom, but thought it wiser to hang back and feign indifference.

"Go, go!" he said, hurriedly, pushing me through the aperture. "Put her in the carriage and drive her off. I will hide here, so that they will not see me."

I have said that I had no conscious sensation of

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fear, but when I passed out of the open door and heard him close it behind me and lock himself into the room, then I knew that I had been in deadly terror. I became so weak suddenly that I could hardly pull myself together sufficiently to descend the stairs. At the landing on the bedroom floor Étienne was waiting. She looked up at me with appealing, inquiring eyes. I spoke low and rapidly :

"Put on your bonnet as quick as you can and come with me. Your father sent me to rescue you, and I have obtained your husband's consent to take you away. Don't lose a moment!"

She obeyed unquestioningly, and we passed down the stairs together and out into the street. There was so much to be said, and so much to be explained, yet we neither of us spoke. We crossed the street, and walked in silence half the length of the block to where the carriage stood. I opened its door and motioned her to get in.

"Stay here while I go in to see Dr. Hude. This is his carriage. He is consulting with Dr. Netley within and expects me. Sit so that you can keep your eye on the door of your house. If Colonel Moir comes out, you must leave the carriage and run up the steps into the doctor's office. We shall probably call you to come in presently. We must all consult together and try to act for the best."

Dear, brave, good girl! She did as she was told, without question or complaint. With a word to the astonished coachman, I left her and mounted the steps. The door was instantly opened to me, and Dr. Hude was at the threshold to meet me.

"She is all right," I exclaimed, breathlessly, "but he is as crazy as a loon!"

The physician smiled blandly. "Of course we know that, but we wished you to be satisfied of it.

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Mr. Frémont, permit me to introduce you to my colleague, Dr. Netley."

I hardly had the patience to bow and shake hands.

"He has commissioned me to drive her to your private hospital, and I have brought her over here. She is sitting in your carriage."

The doctor laughed and rubbed his hands. "You are an excellent manager, Mr. Frémont. This simplifies things immensely. Dr. Netley and I are agreed that she should leave him, as we believe her life to be more or less in danger while his illusions last; but she should stay in the city, as we may need her signature to papers if we decide to confine him. He will now think her in my hospital, and it will then be easier to persuade him to follow our plan of procedure."

"My colleague and I are perfectly agreed, as he states, about the line of action to be pursued with regard to Mrs. Moir," said Dr. Netley, somewhat ponderously. "Unfortunately we are not as well in accord as to the method of procedure with the patient in question. We—"

"It seems to me," I interrupted, "that the first thing is to secure Mrs. Moir's immediate safety. Her husband has commissioned me to deliver her into Dr. Hude's hands. I do so. I would now suggest that Dr. Hude drive her at once to a hotel where she will be beyond reach of danger, for Colonel Moir may change his mind at any moment and rush out to seek her."

The physicians hesitated.

"We should not wish to take any step without due authorization from the family," said Dr. Netley, at last, slowly. "I would suggest that Mr. Frémont, as representing Dr. Chabert, should take Mrs. Moir away."

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"I do not understand professional etiquette," I said, with scant courtesy, "but I do understand common propriety. I know that I, who am absolutely no relation to either, have no right to hide a man's wife away from him. I have done all that Mrs. Moir's father and husband have commissioned me to do. But you can advise her professionally to leave him; she will do as you say, and there is no time to be lost."

The doctors stepped aside and parleyed together. I was in an agony of impatience. I knew perfectly well that if Moir should appear on the scene no power on earth could keep me from interfering between husband and wife. There would be murder before I would see Étienne fall into his hands in his present mental condition. I prayed God that it would not come to that. But the doctors finished their consultation, the upshot of which was that Dr. Hude could, consistently with etiquette, warn his patient's wife that she had best separate from him for a few days until Mr. Arthur could be consulted and it could be determined how to treat his case.

"I do not know if she had her purse with her," I said, hesitatingly. "Will you kindly give her these bills? She may need them. She left home absolutely without preparation."

Dr. Hude descended the steps, stood a moment talking to Étienne through the carriage window, then he gave instructions to the coachman, and the carriage drove off rapidly, I knew not whither.

After writing full particulars to Dr. Chabert, I took the train for Washington that evening. Major Haliburton had accompanied me to New York, as he intended to take the steamer from there to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he was to visit some relations. The steamer sailed duly the day after my departure,

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as I saw by the papers. What was my surprise, then, on my return to New York, five days later, to be welcomed at the hotel door by my old friend.

"Not started yet!" I exclaimed.

"No, sonny," he said, cheerily. "I got down to the wharf, carpet-bag and all, and somehow I kinder recollected that you looked a little down in the mouth when you left for the national capital, and says I to myself, 'It 'll do Robert good to see a friendly face when he returns.' The steamer goes every week, and I reckon my folks can live without me for a while, for they have gone along for three year, and it hasn't busted their hearts yet."

I was much affected by this proof of his attachment. The major knew in a general way that Dr. Chabert was anxious about his daughter's health, but knew nothing further. I would have confided any trouble of my own to him without hesitation, but it seemed to me this was hardly my secret, and until something was definitely arranged I should not speak of it. With great delicacy he refrained from asking me any question. I hastened round to Dr. Hude's office to find what had been done. He was out of town, and I had to wait an hour later until I could see Dr. Netley.

"Mrs. Moir is to leave to-night for her father's home," he said.

"Who goes with her?" I asked.

"She prefers to go alone. She does not wish to take her maid for fear she will gossip, and I did not suggest you as an escort, understanding that you very properly do not wish to be connected with her leaving her husband. It is best for her sake, and no doubt she feels it so, for she did not refer to you. It has been decided by Dr. Hude and Mr. Arthur that Colonel Moir shall travel for a year under the care

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of a young physician and attended by his valet. They feel secure of good results."

"And you do not agree with them?" I ventured.

"I cannot!" he said, decidedly. "I speak to you as I should wish you to report to Dr. Chabert in my name. Mrs. Moir is a very brave and a very loyal young woman. As long as there is any hope of her husband's recovery it is doubtful if she will ever confide even to her own father what she has suffered for the past four years. But when she consulted me about her husband's health, she felt obliged to tell me all that might serve as a key to his condition. Colonel Moir's mind seems to have been slightly unhinged from the first year of their marriage."

"Do you mean that she has seen this coming on for years and has not spoken to her family of it?"

"It seems that from the first he has been very strange to her, giving her no money, not even allowing her to touch the pin-money her father had settled on her. He was jealous and restless if she went anywhere alone, and finally forbade her to stir without him. She has been almost a prisoner in her own house for two years, except when Colonel Moir chose to take her about with him. He took a dislike to music, forbade her to sing, and sent the piano out of the house. He opened and read all her letters. She has led a lonely existence, in terror of her life of late. He buys her most extravagant clothes and keeps her supplied with books, but does not allow her to see any friends unless he brings them to the house himself. Frequently those he brings are undesirable for her to meet. She is a young woman of spirit, and was inclined at first to resent his treatment, until she became convinced that he was deranged. Then she was too nervous and apprehensive to do more than try to keep the peace at any sacrifice.

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Of general society she has long seen nothing. For many months past he has been threatening to send her to an asylum, and she was only able to consult me in secret."

Oh, Étienne! Poor little Étienne! To think that we knew not one word of what you were enduring!

"But did not Mr. Arthur notice his nephew's condition?"

"It appears they are not on good terms. Arthur claimed a large share in some sugar deal, and Moir would not give him a cent. Arthur would not go to court about it—it is whispered that he dared not, as there was something shady about the transaction. But of this I know nothing. For the present they are reconciled, and there has been a compromise."

"And you do not believe in Moir's ultimate recovery?"

"I believe that he may be relieved, may appear to be cured, but that the trouble is liable to break out again in a more dangerous form. If it recurs he is likely to have a peculiar aversion to all who have had any connection in his mind with this first illness that will make it dangerous for them to ever put themselves in his power. He may become sane and remain so to the end of his days, but again a very slight thing may upset him, and the result may be a tragedy."

"Is he likely to live long in this condition?"

"His general health is good. Barring accidents, he is likely to live beyond middle life."

I groaned in spirit. No one wishes to be a murderer, yet how often one would bless Providence if it saw fit to remove a fellow-mortal before his time from this vale of tears!

As the affair was now public property and no

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longer a family secret, I felt at liberty to tell my good Ohio friend the outline of the story, that Dr. Chabert's daughter was going back to her father's home, as her husband was temporarily insane.

"Sho! That's pretty hard lines!" he remarked. "I remember her in Washington as a bride—a pretty, black-eyed girl, with lots o' fine clothes, but a good girl and real spunky. She won my heart because she seemed so cut up about you, and didn't give herself no rest till she had everything prepared in fine style for you when you come out o' prison. There warn't anything in the whole hospital good enough for you. If I'd 'a' been her husband I'd 'a' been jealous. And she a bride, too!" And he laughed as if it were a good joke.

"S'pose you'll be takin' her home in a day or two?" he suggested.

"No," I said, drearily. "She is going on to-night."

"Not alone!" he exclaimed.

"I am afraid so."

He looked puzzled. "Where is she now?" he asked.

"I don't know," I replied, unwillingly. "She is stopping at some hotel in the city; I haven't asked where."

"What in thunder—" he began, then he stopped, muttered to himself a while, said "Sho!" several times with energy, then came and sat down near me in silence, patting my shoulder with his big hand from time to time.

His delicacy and kindness were too much for me, and I put my head down on my arms and sobbed. I tried to speak, but he would not let me.

"You needn't to say nothing," he said, soothingly. "You air a Frémont, and you couldn't do nothing that might lead any way that warn't the straightest

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and best. Yes, when a woman's unhappy, a man that's fond of her ain't so sure of himself as when she don't need no help or comfort, and he had better leave others to do for her at them times. I've never asked you no questions, Robert, but I believe a man should marry young if he can make up his mind to, even if it ain't his first love. But there is times when he can't." He paused. "I ain't never married," he added, slowly.

I raised my head and drew a shade nearer to him. He tipped back his chair, crossed his legs and sat whirling his thumbs and staring steadily before him.

"I come of a better family 'n you'd think. I know I don't talk like a man of education, but the education went to my elder brother. He war smart and wanted to be a doctor, and my father couldn't afford to send two to college, so he sent him. There war just one girl round our way that all of us boys war crazy to marry. Her mother's folks war from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and her father war a professor at the medical school. My brother always got the good things, and he got her."

I moved a little nearer him and laid my hand on his arm. He swallowed hard for a moment and went on :

"As I said, when a girl's happy you can be kinder reconciled, and think perhaps you'll suit yo'rself elsewhere. If she's unhappy it's none of yo'r business, and you oughtn't to think of it, but that's just the time you find you can't look anywheres else. Oneida warn't happy. He war a good man, but his patients war always comin' round and tellin' him their woes, and if she war sick they'd ask him out to tea. I'd left home then, and war doin' pioneer work in the Buckeye State, but I come back from time to time, and I seen how it war. She war sick and lone-

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ly, and he war bein' petted up and havin' a good time and bein' told she didn't appreciate him. Then she died. . . . Nigh twenty year ago. . . . In six months he married a young widder and raised a large family. Eleven. Oneida left one little girl, and her mother's folks took it to raise. They live in Nova Scotia. It's there I'm goin' now, to see my niece, Oneida Haliburton."

CHAPTER XX

I DID not feel that I could trust myself immediately to return to Detroit. I needed a few weeks of absence and change to brace my will to meet the new situation. Étienne living next door again, where I could see her every day, Étienne separated from a husband who had ill-treated her and made her unhappy, Étienne in need, as Major Haliburton had said, of help and comfort, this was a picture which I must turn my eyes from and harden my heart against. I did not feel prepared at once to meet the situation, and my good friend came to my rescue.

"Sonny," he said, a little later that afternoon, "I reckon I know how you feel. You done right, but it's hard for a strong man with chivalry in his soul to leave a lone woman to travel that distance without an escort. She'll have to change cars once or twice and spend a night on the road, at Albany, maybe, or Syracuse, and she brought up like a French girl not to go anywheres alone! I ain't rubbin' it in—I just want you to be free with me, Robert. I'm no lady's man, I'm not cultivated like what she's used ter, but I stand ready to go with her and see she don't want for nothin'. Reckon I'm safe enough! I'm as old a man as her pa, and I'd be as careful of her as I would of my own little Dido. But if you think I wouldn't be good enough for her, just say so. My skin's tough as bark."

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I was overjoyed at his proposition, and convinced him of my delight. It was an easy matter to get Mrs. Moir's address from Dr. Netley, and the good major called immediately to offer his services, which were accepted with such grace that he returned to our rooms in the best of spirits.

"Did you have to refer to me at all?" I asked, hesitatingly, as he crammed his belongings into his capacious carpet-bag with ruthless hands.

He turned half round and gave me one of his long, comprehensive winks. "Robert," he said, impressively, "there ain't a man livin' has a greater regard for truth, *as* truth, than Levi T. Haliburton. But you air detained in Washington, Robert. Not that she asked for ye. She didn't. But I had to make some explanation of how I come to offer as her escort. The Secretary of the Interior had important business with you concernin' some canal, and it might detain you for days. You air a very talented engineer, Robert, and Uncle Sam's government thinks a heap of you."

I nodded wearily. I must learn not to care how I appeared in Nita's eyes. But the major looked uneasy at my silence, and seemed to think it necessary to justify his action.

"You see, the Good Book says, Robert, that if you talk with the tongue of an angel and haven't charity yo'r religion ain't worth a damn; which I take to mean that you needn't be so all-fired truthful as to hurt any one's feelin's. Now I didn't want that pretty creatur' to think that you nor no man else would ever neglect her, or fail to provide for her comfort. It always seem to me that what Ananias suffered warn't so much for reason o' tellin' a lie as for cheatin' the poor. I believe that if he'd told the lie the other way, so's to give more 'n his share, 'stead o' less, the Lord

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would 'a' winked at it, and Ananias would 'a' been alive to this day!"

He did not seem to understand why I laughed so immoderately. "Glad to see you in such spirits," he said, gruffly. "Laugh away! I done the best for you I know how, and I can't do no better than that. But I tell you what it is, Robert, I don't do nothin' for nothin'! If I go to Detroit for you, you air to go to Halifax with me."

This was not a bad idea. It fell in exactly with my wish for a prolonged absence from home, and so it came about that I arranged to take a three weeks' vacation and started with him for Halifax. I went determined to enjoy myself, and to drive Étienne from my mind by filling it with all other possible interests and occupations. Étienne must bear her own crosses that the Lord had sent her, I could not bear them for her or be disciplined in her stead, but I could take comfort in feeling that she was safe with her father and mother, and in no present danger from her husband's illusions and vagaries.

The major told me something about his niece's position while we were on the big Cunarder sailing to Liverpool *via* Halifax.

"As I war sayin' to you, her mother's folks took her to raise when she warn't no more 'n a baby, and her aunt Sophy seen after her in especial. Sophy ain't like Oneida war. She's short and stout, but Oneida war tall and slender, and made you think of a lily every time you'd look at her. I expect her child is growin' up like her, though I ain't seen her for three years, but her folks call her Dido, and they tell me Dido war some kind of a queen in old times way back when folks war mostly pagan. Her great-uncle have a large family, and live in a big place in the country. He's some pumpkins up there—got a

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handle to his name and half the alphabet after it. You can't pronounce it, 'cause there ain't no vowel, nothin' but consonants."

He fumbled with his pocket-book and produced a card, which he handed me with an affected air of indifference, though I knew well that he expected me to be deeply impressed by it.

"Sir Everard Bourke, K.C.M.G., C.B.," I read out.

"Yes, that's the way they spell it, but do you know how they pronounce it, sonny?" he asked, anxiously.

"Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George and Companion of the Order of the Bath," I replied, glibly.

"I want to know!" he ejaculated. "It's easy readin' for you, 'cause you live right up there among them Canucks and know their ways. Now I've had that card nigh three year, and couldn't never make head or tail out of it. I thought maybe it war French. The ladies write on their cards sometimes P. P. C. and R. S. V. P., and they say it means somethin' to them that know French. They air half French up in Canady, and I thought maybe they use the same system of spellin'."

The gay season in Halifax was during the summer and autumn months. The British fleet, stationed at Bermuda in winter, had its summer headquarters at Halifax, the chief garrison town of British America. The presence of a large number of young officers with plenty of time on their hands for social enjoyment gave rise to continuous entertainments in the form of military balls, dinners, picnics, high teas, lawn-parties, hops on board the men-of-war, small dances and sports of all kinds. My grandfather had procured for me from some of

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the dignitaries in Upper Canada letters of introduction to the Governor of Nova Scotia and many Hali-gonian officials, and I also carried letters from Washington officials to the colonel of the Royal Engineers and to two of the leading civil engineers of Nova Scotia. Armed with these, I was received with characteristic hospitality, was made the guest of the best clubs, and was soon almost overwhelmed with invitations and calls. I was there to enjoy myself, and I entered into the spirit of the gayety with all the zest which generous strains of French and Irish blood brought to the fore.

I did not wish to force myself upon Major Haliburton's friends, or to disturb the privacy of a family reunion, and had not accompanied him in his first visits to Sir Everard's residence in the suburbs, but at the end of a few days I received a formal invitation to dine there. I went to show my note to the major and found him in a regular panic.

"Robert," he said, in an awe-stricken whisper, "I wish you to accept. I'm proud of you and I wish them to know you. But I—er, I don't feel well. I'm ailin' a little, an' I don't think a dinner 'd agree with me. I, er—the truth is, Robert, I never been to a dinner-party in all my life, and there's goin' to be twenty at table, Dido tells me, young and old, twenty low-neck and swallow-tails, and they air goin' to hunt in couples, ten pair men and women, and dinner to begin at half-past seven. Of course, I been to political banquets, but there they ain't no women round, and I always give the nigger behind my chair a dollar bill to keep me posted what knife and fork to use, and there's so much speechifyin' and hurrahin' that nobody pays attention to yo'r table manners, anyhow. But I done pretty well here till now. I ain't done Oneida no discredit so far as I know, and

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I don't want to begin now. The New York tailor give me the right clothes, and you tell me when to put them on; I've been mighty careful o' my grammar, an' I've took no meal at the big house but tea, which is plain sailin', only they take it in the drawing-room, and the cups air tarnation small. It ain't quite hearty enough for me—just buttered toast and muffins and cake. I like preserve and a bit o' ham or chipped beef with mine, and a couple o' baked potatoes, and a table to spread it out on. But seems they feed again later, and tea is just a kind o' stop-gap between two-o'clock dinner and seven-o'clock dinner. They have a cup o' tea and buttered toast when they get up in the mornin', and breakfast at ten, and they take a bite o' somethin' with a cocktail when they go to bed, so 'tain't likely they'll die from lack o' sustenance."

"Don't worry about the dinner-party, Uncle Lee," I said, reassuringly. He had once told me that was the name his niece called him by, not fancying his Christian name of Levi, and I had adopted the appellation. "Give the dollar bill to me and I'll tell you what to do as well as any nigger."

I persuaded him to send a formal acceptance, but his spirits fell lower and lower as the time grew near.

"It ain't no use," he complained. "As soon as I begin to think about it I grow weak and shivery all over and my insides squirm all round in my stomach. I'm goin' to have an illness, Robert, I know I am. Such feelin's ain't natural. I have rode through a hail o' bullets without turnin' a hair, but just the thought o' this here party makes me as sick as a cat."

"Oh, you just need a little coaching," I exclaimed, cheerily. "As soon as you feel confidence in yourself you'll be all right. Now, I will tell you how it will be. We shall enter the drawing-room together,

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and there will be a big footman at the door who will ask our names and shout out 'Major Haliburton and Mr. *Freemont*!' The host and hostess will be standing near the door and will shake hands with us. Then we cross over to a corner and stand by ourselves till dinner is announced, when the hostess will introduce you to some lady, and you will offer her your arm—"

"Which arm?" he interrupted.

I gasped in pretended dismay. "I've got a little mixed up on the arms," I stammered, "but it's bound to be one or the other, not both at once."

Obviously he had lost confidence in me. "I might see which one she starts to hook on to," he suggested.

"You can leave everything to the lady," I said, eagerly. "She will fall into line when it is your turn to walk into the dining-room, and she will go straight to the right seats at table. They are trained to know these things. You must not sit down or begin to talk when you get to the table, for the host will ask a blessing first. Then about the middle of dinner, just after the game and before the sweets, the host will suddenly fall forward in his seat with his head and arms on the table, his eyes rolling and a kind of apoplectic gurgle in his throat, and there will be a start and hush all round the table; but don't be alarmed, he isn't in a fit, he is only saying grace. The Haligonians always return thanks in the middle of dinner, I suppose for fear they won't be in condition to do it at the end."

"But the forks, Robert," he groaned, "the forks and spoons? I suppose I could say I felt a little out o' sorts, and only eat the soup and ice-cream. But one o' the worst things comes at the very start and puts me all out o' countenance, and that's the shell oysters. I'd a heap sight rather eat 'em stewed;

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then you can chase 'em round with a spoon with some chance of getting 'em cornered. But these raw things air all-fired slippery and they stick to the shell like leeches. I wrestled with 'em once and I know. I tell you it ain't no use, Robert; I ain't fit for these entertainments, and I hadn't oughter go. I'm gettin' a chill. I feel the symptoms."

He took to his bed that afternoon. My medicine chest contained only three remedies—quinine, paregoric, and calomel—and I tried them all in turn without success. He went from bad to worse, until I decided that we had better send word without delay to Sir Everard and Lady Bourke of his inability to attend the dinner on the morrow, that they might secure a guest in his place. When I returned from despatching the note, I found him sitting up, looking a little shamefaced.

"I feel some better, sonny," he said, apologetically. "I guess yo'r remedies air beginnin' to take a hold."

"I am very glad," I said, mischievously, "for I couldn't hire any one to take that note way out to the Northwest Arm, and you'll have to go, after all."

He turned so pale and looked at me in such consternation that I hadn't the heart to tease him long, and, after I had nearly frightened him back to bed, I admitted that the note was well on the way to its destination, and he breathed freely again.

Captain Larpent, of the Royal Engineers, drove me out in his trap to the Bourke residence on the Northwest Arm, a lovely sheet of water, an inlet of Halifax Bay, surrounded by the country-houses of wealthy Haligonians. After we had passed through the lodge gates and were driving up the shady approach, I noticed a pretty cottage buried under the trees, which he told me was occupied by Miss Sophy Bourke.

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"She is an independent, energetic little old maiden lady, and lives there with a niece she has adopted. They have not been long returned from home."

"Home," of course meant England, where all good Nova Scotians who could afford it sent their sons and daughters to be educated. After entering the drawing-room and paying my respects to Sir Everard and Lady Bourke, I was introduced in rapid succession to "Miss Bourke," "Miss Sophy Bourke," "Miss Bourke again," "Miss Bourke again." This was puzzling, for the major had not told me there were so many granddaughters in the family. Miss Sophy Bourke I distinguished at once from his description—a lady about fifty years of age, short, plump, and rosy, but the three ladies of the younger generation were strikingly alike. They were of the Celtic order of coloring, with black hair, blue eyes, very dark brows and lashes, and red-and-white complexions. The Halifax girls, as a rule, were small and lively, but the three Miss Bourkes were tall and stately, with broad shoulders, small waists and slender hips, long necks and shapely heads. Their manners were correct and dignified; they were reserved of speech and sparing of smiles. Their noses were aquiline; they had arched nostrils and short upper lips, and all the other adjuncts that go to make up the high-bred, aristocratic type of British beauty.

I had hoped that I should be appointed to take Miss Haliburton into dinner, but I found myself assigned to one of the Miss Bourkes. I made as careful a study of her face as I dared, so that I might be able to distinguish her from her sisters, for the three girls dressed alike and seemed to be exactly of an age. My Miss Bourke I discovered to be not quite so tall as her sisters, to have blacker hair and eyelashes, eyebrows

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that nearly met, and a shy, startled-fawn expression in her Irish-blue eyes. The three maidens all looked proud and grave, but I believed mine to be more timid than proud, shy and inexperienced rather than serious, and it put me on my mettle at once to try to rouse her and draw her out. It proved to be a very difficult task. I did not wish to treat her as a school-girl, ask her how long she had been back from England, if she liked dancing and played croquet, if she preferred riding to driving, drawing to singing; but unfortunately I had not acquired the small-talk of Halifax, and as she introduced no subject of conversation I had unwillingly to resort to the catechising process. I extorted the information that she had been six years at school in the country in England, and had lived two years in London, that she preferred Halifax to London, because here she was allowed to attend dinner-parties, which was not customary with unmarried young girls at "home," that she did not play the piano nor sing, but was fond of drawing and sketching in water-colors, that she could play croquet, that she had no saddle-horse of her own, and therefore seldom rode, and that her favorite sport was lobster-spearing. I was not familiar with this sport, though I had speared frogs and black bass in the lake country, and asked her to describe it to me, but she looked alarmed, and said, hesitatingly, that I should probably have a chance to try it for myself before I left Halifax.

I began to fear that my handsome companion with the poetic brow and romantic eyes, the aristocratic profile and classic throat, was not merely shy but dull. There was no doubt that Étienne had spoiled me for other women—Étienne, so vivacious and full of fun; accomplished, well read, travelled; witty, but always refined; lively, yet always modest

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and self-respecting ; gay, though full of deep and sincere feeling. I realized with a little pang at my heart that I must not let my thoughts go back to her, and I would have been well pleased could I have fallen desperately in love at this juncture. I was on the lookout for an object for my affections, and it annoyed me to find myself so fastidious. This young girl beside me was almost ideally handsome in face and figure, sensitively good and sweet in disposition, if look and manner were to be believed, and no doubt carefully educated upon the best feminine models, yet I turned from her impatiently and set her down as dull because she failed to entertain me with a lot of society small-talk. On the other hand, how many attractive and entertaining young women I had hardened my heart against because they lacked the high-bred charm and beauty of Miss Bourke. There was no doubt at all that I was an unreasonable cad. I hated myself for it, and told myself severely that the ladies were probably far more critical of me than I of them.

"I am very desirous to meet your cousin," I said, at last, when the pause in the conversation had grown intolerably long, and she had done nothing to relieve it.

"Which cousin?" she inquired.

"Oneida, Miss Haliburton," I explained. "Her uncle, Major Haliburton, has been a friend to me since my boyhood. He tells me you call her 'Dido.'"

She looked up at me with her beautiful, romantic, Irish-blue eyes, full of a shy wildness, like those of a frightened gazelle. A wave of rich color swept the soft oval of her cheek.

"I am Dido," she murmured, in low, embarrassed tones.

CHAPTER XXI

L ARPENT explained the situation to me as we drove home that night.

"Miss Sophy has had the care of her niece ever since she was a baby, and has legally adopted her as her heir under the name of Bourke, the father having given up all rights in the child. She has never been known here by any other name. She looks like her cousins, and they make a handsome group, so near of an age, too. Sir Everard's granddaughters are twins, Anna and Minna, but they are such young goddesses in figure that every one calls them 'Diana' and 'Minerva.' Their cousin Oneida is six months younger, and such a queenly girl that she is 'Dido' to every one. Sir Everard's daughters will be heiresses, however, while Miss Oneida will only have what Miss Sophy will leave her, a very modest sum, I suspect, unless her American uncle comes down generously. If he would only provide handsomely for her she could easily cut her cousins out."

I could honestly say that I did not know what the major's circumstances were. That he was more than the humble engineer of a lake tug that he appeared at our first meeting I had soon satisfied myself. He had assumed that position as he had assumed many others of difficulty or danger, when the Underground Railroad called for his services in the rescue of fugitive slaves. The younger son of a poorly paid min-

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ister in a small New England town, his interests had been sacrificed to the college education of his older brother. At fourteen he had been taken away from the village school and set to work upon a small, struggling farm. At twenty-four, disappointed in love and discontented with the narrow outlook in his native village, he had started for the Northwest Territory. There he had been successful in pioneer work and farming, and had built himself what was considered a fine residence in the main street of Sandusky, a square white house with a cupola in the centre, having colored-glass windows. But after the Civil War his restless spirit was not satisfied with the limitations of city life. The negroes still appealed to his sympathies, and now that they had been emancipated and there was no more rescue work to be done, a new form of bondage threatened them in the persecutions of the "carpet-baggers" and low whites. The major sold his Sandusky residence, took up his carpet-bag and moved first into West Virginia, then down into North Carolina.

"There air carpet-baggers and carpet-baggers," he had said. "I am one, and I am goin' down there to see that the nigger gets fair play, if I have to do some reconstructin' myself."

I doubted if he had accumulated much wealth under these circumstances. He always seemed to have plenty of money to spend, but his wants were few, and his greatest vice tobacco-chewing. He was shrewd at a bargain, and a little money would go a long way with him, but his generosity led him to be reckless in expenditure where others were concerned. Perhaps he would save if he had an object in view, like laying up an inheritance for his niece or endowing an institution for the education of the negro, but for himself I knew him to be indifferent.

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He was still sitting up when I returned to our rooms. He tried to look humble, but I knew that he was bursting with pride and exultant expectancy.

"You are a humbug, Uncle Lee, that's what you are—a regular sly one!" I exclaimed. "To think of your never even hinting that one of the most beautiful girls in the world was your niece. Heavens! how an artist would rave over that head or a poet over those eyes, and you to sit there like a bump on a log with never a word!"

He gave a chuckle of delight which he instantly tried to repress.

"How should I know?" he asked, deprecatingly. "She is good-lookin' in my eyes, but how should I know she would be in your'n? You have seen all the beauties of Europe from the Empress You-genee down. You air mighty fastidious about women, Robert, and how'd I know what was goin' to suit your ideels o' female loveliness?"

I could honestly satisfy him on that point, and every feature of his rugged face radiated with joy.

"And what did you two talk about, sonny?" he asked.

"About you," I replied. "At first I didn't know that she was your niece; I thought she was one of Sir Everard's daughters, Miss Diana or Miss Minerva, so I didn't know what would interest her. But as soon as she told me she was your Dido, we talked a blue streak and all about you, about the fugitive slaves and the war, and what you are doing for the negroes now, and what you have done for me. She said she had always been proud of you, and now she was prouder than ever."

"Sho! She didn't, did she? I want to know!" he ejaculated, grinning with delight. "That's a good boy to stand up for your old friend! I tell you,

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Robert, when I'm talkin' to her yo'r reputation don't suffer, neither. She knows as how you sailed that ice-boat the coldest night o' winter at the peril o' yo'r life; she knows how you risked life and limb for niggers when you hadn't no cause to love 'em. She knows how you built that breakwater in Lake Huron, and how when the float broke her moorin's you held on to that rope for hours, with the waves rushin' over you like great mountains, till every mother's son among the workmen was slung ashore in safety, and then you tied the rope round yo'r shoulders and fainted away, and they pulled you ashore through the breakers more dead 'n alive. I seen yo'r hands a week after, and they war a sight!"

"Pshaw!" I said, impatiently. "Things like that are done every day in marine engineering, and nobody ever mentions it. If you were on the lookout for heroes you'd find them as thick as bees among the workingmen, but we don't stop to think of those things. I may have saved a few workmen's lives once, but the brave boys have saved mine a dozen times under far worse circumstances. They don't pose for the newspapers, they just do their duty."

"Well, some bosses don't share perils with their workmen like you do. I used to think to be a hero a man had to be a soldier, but I guess you air right. Heroes air lyin' round thick in every occupation and perfession, if you only look out for 'em."

From this time on I was a frequent guest at "Midfields." Finding that I was not familiar with the sport of lobster-spearing, a party was arranged shortly after for my benefit. We were a merry group of young people that gathered a dozen strong in the hall as soon as it was fully dark. The ladies were equipped in short linsey-woolsey Balmoral petti-

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coats and Garibaldi shirts of red flannel, the men in stout jerseys, barefooted, with trousers rolled up to the knee. The ladies carried torches of pitch-pine, and the men were armed with long, two-pronged spears, and in this guise we crossed the smooth lawn to the boat-houses, where three large, flat-bottomed row-boats were awaiting us. To Oneida was appointed the task of initiating me into the mysteries of the sport, assisted by a merry, fair-haired Hali-gonian lass by the name of Day. Our other cavalier was Mr. McCulloh, of the Royal Artillery. Two other boat-loads of young couples pushed off, and from a canoe we were decorously chaperoned by Mrs. Darcy, the young wife of the colonel of hussars, accompanied by Mr. Beaumaris, of her Britannic Majesty's ship *Bucentaur*. Until we met, two hours later, at the rendezvous, this was the last we saw of our discreet chaperon or of our companion boats. Having installed the young ladies, one in the bow, the other in the stern, McCulloh and I waded out through the gentle surf till we floated the boat in comparatively deep water, then we tumbled in, and, standing up to our oars, poled quietly along the shore towards Halifax Bay. About a mile down the Arm we stopped and allowed the boat to drift silently in shoal water. The girls then held the flickering torches over the boat's edge, and, looking over the side, we could clearly discern the sandy bottom strewn with rocks and stones, thick with a heavy growth of sea-weed. These were the abiding-places of crabs and lobsters, and we could see their dark forms, disturbed by our presence, hurrying from shelter to shelter across the stretches of clear sand. McCulloh, who was an old hand at the sport, took his spear, and, biding his chance, darted it suddenly at his dusky prey, striking it exactly behind the long fore-claws, where the two

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prongs, one of which acted as a spring, closed over the shell, and the creature was raised to the surface, liberated, and thrown into the bottom of the boat, where he crawled about, making occasional vicious attacks at our feet. The spearing process appeared to be a simple one, and not unlike other sports I was familiar with, and I took hold of my instrument without any misgivings, but was quickly undeceived. The uncertain light from the flickering torches, the refraction of the water which gave the spear the look of bending off at an angle, the motion of the boat, and the subtlety of the lobster himself, who would remain immovable until the spear was within six inches of his body, then suddenly, with a sort of mocking courtesy, slide swiftly away from it in a totally unexpected direction—all combined to make the spearman's work exasperatingly difficult and exciting. At the end of an hour and a half I found myself very hot, very smoke-begrimed, partly vexed and partly amused, with two very pugnacious brown specimens to show for my work. My companions comforted me by the assurance that it was rare for a novice to capture any at all. McCulloh, more experienced at the sport, soon had fourteen to his credit. Miss Day held the torches for us, while Oneida, quiet and stately, gently propelled the boat with a short paddle. The romantic, picturesque character of the girl's beauty was revealed more charmingly than ever under the wavering, uncertain lights and shadows cast by the flickering torches. Her silence fitted with the scene. There was no moon, and the night was very dark, but across the bay we could see the twinkle of approaching torches. I rowed rapidly back to the boat-house, and all met promptly at the rendezvous. As we arrived at the house, wet and grimy, our host regaled us with hot Scotches and

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took us to the bedrooms to clean up and get into civilized garments again.

"May I take you home in my trap?" asked McCulloh, who was apportioned the same room as myself.

"Thank you, but I have already accepted the kindness from Larpent."

"Sorry, I'm sure, but you'll enjoy Larpent. Awfully nice fellow and a general favorite. Awfully sad story, though."

"I have not heard his story," I said. "Is it generally known? No one has yet spoken of it to me."

"His wife left him ten or twelve years ago. He had just been sent to this station after the Crimea, and had nice quarters at the Engineer Barracks, and was busy preparing them for her and the children, who were waiting in Paris till he should be ready for them. One fine day he hears that she has sent the children to his mother in England and has eloped with some other fellow. He is always expecting her to come back to him, and keeps his quarters in readiness. His children are still in England at school, and spend the holidays with the grandmother. It is said he writes them long letters every week in their mother's name, so that they will not guess she is away from home, and he does not go to see them for fear they will ask why their mother is not with him. He began this way when they were little chaps, hoping that she would soon return, and that they need never know of her absence, but he can't keep it up much longer. They are big lads of fourteen and sixteen, and they must soon find out now."

"He looks young to have such big boys."

"He is not yet forty—married at twenty-one, I believe. All the best years of his life sacrificed to a woman who doesn't deserve such fidelity. It is a queer thing, this matrimony," went on Mr. McCul-

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loh, rubbing himself down vigorously. "You never know how it is going to take a man. Here is Larpent, a spirited, sensible fellow on most subjects, yet he sits down quietly under his wife's desertion and allows himself and his children to suffer the loss of all home life just to shield her, instead of saying to the heartless creature, 'Go and be damned! my children and I will have a happy home without you!' Another fellow without half Larpent's spirit would have kicked up a row, got a divorce, and been well rid of her. It is the same way with the women. A fine, strong woman, that you would think had a will of her own, will put up with the worst kind of treatment from some brute of a husband, while another gentle-looking creature, married to some nice, amiable fellow, will raise the devil of a row for the merest trifle. We see matrimony at pretty close quarters in the barracks. You can't keep any family secrets there. The world thinks that the colonel and his wife are a happy, united couple, but every one in the officers' quarters knows that they both have devilish tempers, that they are horribly jealous, call each other names and fling plates at each other across the breakfast-table. Whatever you do, Frémont," his head emerging through an immaculate shirt, "don't marry in quarters."

A few minutes later we were in the dining-room feasting merrily on broiled live lobster, hot coffee and ale. An informal dance in the drawing-room brought the evening to a pleasant close, and, taking all its features into consideration, I was not surprised that Miss Dido should think lobster-spearing the most enjoyable of all the sports. The young ladies furnished the music by turns at the piano, and we were offered claret-cup between dances. I had fresh occasion in the waltzing to admire the stately grace of the three

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Miss Bourkes. With them dancing was not, as with Miss Day and the two Miss Stairs, a mere merry romp, but was lifted to the grade of a divine art. I could not but express my admiration of their exquisite movements to Larpent on our homeward ride.

"I understand that they were trained to it at the old-fashioned select school they attended near London," he said. "Calisthenics and deportment were a great feature of the training. Miss Minerva tells me that they learned to walk and to dance while balancing a glass full of water on their heads, in order to move quietly, keep themselves perfectly erect, and obtain the proper poise of the head. Of course they had inherited fine figures to begin with, but the training has much to do with it. Their mothers went through the same discipline before them, and they will give it to their children in turn. All races that carry burdens on the head walk well and are erect and graceful."

As we neared the town he begged me to finish the evening with a cigar in his room at the club. "If you are as enthusiastic a smoker as I, Mr. Freemont, you will have been dying for a cigar ever since supper."

I accepted his invitation gratefully enough. He seemed to have taken a fancy to me, and I, on my side, felt a strange interest in him, especially since hearing his story. As we settled ourselves comfortably to our cigars, I said:

"I ought to explain to you that my name is not *Freemont*, as it is so generally pronounced here. It is called in the States *Fremont*, but is really of French origin and should be *Frémont*—Rodéric, or, as I am often called, *Éric Frémont*."

"*Éric!*" he echoed, in a low voice, looking at me strangely.

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"Yes," I replied, easily. "Though an American, I have more French blood in my veins than any except Irish. My grandfather, who has adopted me, was a de Macarty. In fact, during my residence in France some years ago I was always known as 'Éric de Macarty.'"

"My God!"

He had sprung to his feet, his cigar had dropped to the floor, he was staring at me with startled eyes from a face of ashen paleness.

"Éric de Macarty!" he stammered, with thick, hoarse utterance. "You are the man I have been waiting eleven years to kill!"

CHAPTER XXII

THE man before me was neither mad nor drunk. He was agitated, but he was in perfect possession of all his faculties. That he must be laboring under some frightful mistake was evident, but until I could prove it a mistake my position was not a pleasant one. It seemed to be my fate to get into unpleasant positions, and I wondered if I should escape from this one as easily as from my adventure with Montgomerie Moir.

I looked up at him coolly, took the cigar from my lips and laid it upon the ash-tray. There was no particular reason why I should smoke the cigars of a man who was thirsting for my heart's blood.

"I am sorry I did not know you were waiting for me," I remarked, quietly. "I would have kept you waiting a little longer. Do you intend to kill me on the spot, or do you give me a chance to try conclusions with you?"

"I am no assassin," he said, scornfully. "You shall have your choice of pistols, but it must be here and now." He staggered a little and put his hand to his brow.

"Great God!" he muttered. "To think that I should have fancied you and thought to make you my friend!" The veins stood out on his forehead, and his hands trembled violently. "Why did it not strike me before that you exactly answered the de-

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scription? There is but one thing more, will you write out your name for me in full?"

"Certainly," I said, taking up the pen he pushed towards me. As I wrote I saw him move to a cupboard, take out a pair of pistols and lay them on the table by my side. I could see also that in his hand he held a yellow, crumpled piece of paper.

"The same handwriting!" he exclaimed, watching me as I wrote my name in firm, bold characters. "Just one thing more, Mr. Éric de Macarty. Add the date!" he hissed into my ear—"the date, July 12, 1857."

I threw down the pen. I saw it all now.

"So she was your wife!" I exclaimed.

"You admit it!" he cried, laying his hand on one of the pistols. "You admit it, do you? you cold-blooded, cowardly rascal!"

I turned round on him fiercely. "Admit what?" I asked. "We are speaking of your wife. What do you wish me to admit?"

His hand clenched the pistol, his breath came hard. "You left Paris with her on the noon express of that date for Fontainebleau," he said, hoarsely.

"I acknowledge it," I replied, unflinchingly. "And what do you infer from that?"

"You took a coupé at the station and drove her in it to the Hôtel de la Ville de Lyon."

"I admit it," I said again, boldly, "and I ask you again, what do you infer from that?"

"You went with her to her rooms"—he continued, gaspingly, but I interrupted him.

"I admit it!" I cried, furiously, bringing my fist down on the table. "I admit it, and I repeat my question, what do you infer from it? If you infer dishonor to your wife or insult to me, then take up your pistol, you coward, and defend yourself!"

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He staggered a little and seemed uncertain what to say or do. I followed up my advantage.

"Whichever kills the other, the result is the same," I said, "a public scandal, dishonor to your wife, disgrace to your home, perdition to your soul. You are a fool!"

He dropped the pistol, sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. "Macarty," he groaned, "you are right. I am a coward and a fool. I cannot kill you, or her, or myself. I have waited so long for my revenge, and now the moment has come my hand fails me."

I sat down quietly near him. "It fails you," I said, gently, "because this is not the right moment, nor am I the right man. Look well at me, Captain Larpent. How old a man am I?"

He raised his eyes heavily. "Twenty-eight or thirty."

"I am twenty-eight," I replied. "My birth and baptism are recorded in the Cathedral of San Cristóbal of Havana, the 6th of January, 1840. Eleven years ago I was a boy of seventeen, a friendless student in Paris. I determined to run away from a guardian I disliked and seek refuge with an old family friend living in Fontainebleau."

"You could have been no more than a boy at that time," he assented, in a low voice. "She was then twenty-seven."

"I took a second-class ticket," I continued. "The carriage was very full when an English lady got in, and I showed her a slight courtesy in finding her a seat. She spoke kindly to the lonely boy, and I confided in her that I had not the address of my friend in Fontainebleau. She suggested a search at the hotels, and I went with her first to the Ville de Lyon, where she offered me the hospitality of a cup of tea,

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after our hot journey, which I accepted, the tea being served by her maid. I then started in search of my friend, and was met at the door by the driver of the coupé, asking for a written statement from me that I had hailed his vehicle and no other, as his fellow-coachmen were jealous. That writing you have somehow obtained possession of. I have never laid eyes again on the gracious English lady that I now suppose to be your wife, for she told me that her husband was an officer stationed at Halifax."

He sighed heavily. "I believe you, Macarty. I have betrayed myself. I have been a fool!"

"You are not yourself to-night, Captain Larpent," I suggested, "nor am I. By to-morrow morning we shall have both forgotten what has been said here."

But he shook his head sadly. "You mean kindly, Macarty, but we are neither of us drunk, nor is there any use in my trying to conceal what you probably know as well as every one else. For my boys' sake I have hoped against hope that my wife would return to me, that I might take her home to children who would never know that she had been away from me. But I am desperate now. I cannot keep up the farce much longer. I have always believed that I could not stand face-to-face with the man who led her to leave me without killing him, but now I see that my children would not thank me for it. I must give up my revenge, the only thing that has helped me to keep my self-respect all these years."

"May I ask you to explain one thing?" I inquired. "How did you obtain that paper? What clew had you that led to your getting possession of it?"

"To be sure, I owe you that explanation, though it will cost me much to give it. In the spring of 1857 I was ordered to Halifax. My wife and children were to join me in midsummer. Their coming was

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postponed, and soon after I heard that she had sent the children to my mother, and was living in an apartment in Paris. She was a pretty woman, fond of admiration: we were often separated by the necessities of my profession, and I was morbidly jealous. I took the next steamer for England, after writing to an artist friend of mine who was studying in Paris to secure rooms for me and to try and get the address of my wife's apartment. He met me at the Paris station with the desired address, which he had obtained through the police. I drove straight to the house, and was told by the porter that the lady had left a week previously, the morning of July 12th, for Fontainebleau. When I told my friend of this he informed me that, curiously enough, a young man who had been for some weeks at one of the fashionable foreign hotels had mysteriously disappeared on the morning of July 12th, and had been traced to Fontainebleau in company with an English lady who exactly answered my wife's description."

"Your friend was very ready," I suggested.

He lifted his head suddenly. "Do you suspect him?" he asked.

I parried the question. "Did it never occur to you to do so?"

"Never, before God! I followed up the clew he gave me, traced you to the hotel at Fontainebleau, obtained this paper from the coachman, signed by you, and found that my wife had left the day before for Biarritz. I set detectives upon her path, not to find her, but to trace you. I had to leave France six weeks later in my country's service, and no trace of you had yet been found."

"Of course not! They should have looked for me in Paris. Did not your informant know that I had returned and was living openly in the home of my

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friends there? If he knew so well of my disappearance he should certainly have heard that I was found!"

"No. He urged upon me to follow the Biarritz clew. I had to return to my duties, and I vowed before Heaven to shield my wife as far as I could for our children's sake, but that if her lover ever crossed my path I would kill him!"

A suspicion was burning itself into my brain. "May I know, Captain Larpent, the name of the friend who was so conversant with my affairs, so ready to throw suspicion on my good name?"

"You must not look at it in that light, Macarty. The suspicion gave him great pain, especially as he was in some way connected with your family."

"It was Montgomerie Moir!" I exclaimed.

"Moir is a charming, refined fellow, with whom I have kept up relations ever since," said Larpent, in a marked way, "and who married a very brilliant and gifted society girl. It would dishonor me to suspect him."

I crossed the room to the fireplace in a tumult of emotions. There was nothing short of murder in my heart and a wild desire to tell this man how he had been deceived, for it danced madly through my brain that if Larpent killed Moir, then Étienne would be free, free from a madman's claims, free to marry me! I do not know how long it was before I could control myself enough to say, in a tolerably natural voice: "Of course Moir is out of the question. I uttered my suspicion before I knew who your friend was. It simply goes to show that I should not make a good detective. But I am very grateful to you, Captain Larpent, for your confidence in me. I am almost a stranger to you, yet you have believed my

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word against very strong evidence. I thank you for it."

I started to go, for the hour was late, but he made a sign for me to linger. There was evidently more that he wished to say when he felt calm enough. At last he began, a little unsteadily:

"I have not had a happy home, but perhaps I did not deserve it. I was a faithful husband, but my youth had been wild, and it is only disappointment and sorrow that have taught me the beauty and value of domestic virtue. But I cannot now see a young man like you, good looking and good principled, gifted with youth, health, talent, and high aims, without at once praying God that he may be blessed with a wife as good as himself, and found with her a happy, blessed home. I have given you my confidence, Macarty, but I have no right to yours."

"One confidence deserves another," I said, trying to speak not too feelingly. "I am neither married nor engaged, for the sufficient reason that I grew up loving one little girl with all my heart, but when I went to the war I supposed her still too young to be thinking of marriage, and when I returned I found her—married."

He leaned forward and looked at me as if he would read into my very soul.

"I find it the harder to forget her, as I know that her married life is not a happy one," I went on. "Of course that makes no difference in her duty, or in mine either, and God knows I am trying to forget her. It would be both unworthy and criminal to waste the best years of this life in hoping that another man might be providentially removed from it for my possible benefit. Besides," I added, with a miserable attempt at a laugh, "he is healthy, and comes of long-lived stock. No! I know my duty

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under these conditions, and I shall bless with my whole heart the woman who will teach me to say, 'I have forgotten!'"

Larpent arose and walked about the room in an agitated manner, dropping sentences at intervals as he passed near me, and at last stopping by my chair and laying his hand on my shoulder. "Do you think that I do not understand what the temptation is, to waste one's life longing for things that cannot come except through the death of another? I am not yet forty years old, I have had no wife, no home for eleven years, and I am constantly thrown with sweet, good young women who would bring a blessing into any man's life. Am I made of stone, that I never think of this? You have the advantage of being free. She may not be your first choice, but when you meet the desirable woman you may marry her and I may not. She is near you, as beautiful and good, as true and pure as any that ever trod God's earth, a queenly lily from the garden of paradise. She has looked into your eyes and seen her hero. She is yours for the asking, and you are blessedly free to take her to blossom in your home. Give your life into her keeping, and never fear but that she will teach you to say, 'I have forgotten!'"

He stopped, overcome with emotion, and I was conscious of a strange choking at my throat, though my predominating feeling was one of intense surprise. I could not mistake his meaning. He loved Oneida Haliburton; he was not free to try to win her, and he believed her to be attracted towards me.

"It cannot be as you think," I murmured. "I am no hero of fiction to win a woman's heart in a week. You admit that you are full of sentimental dreams, and you have unconsciously woven an impossible romance. In time I might perhaps hope to win

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a happiness of which I am so unworthy, but for the present you are dreaming. Dreaming!" I repeated.

"Am I?" he asked, with a sad smile. "Perhaps I am, but she has known you longer than you think. From her childhood you have been pictured to her as a hero by one who loves you both in his homely, honest fashion. You were no stranger to her when she met you a few nights ago, and I, who know her so well, read in her lovely eyes that you did not disappoint her maidenly expectations. I had fancied you from the first, and when I thus saw you together I felt that you should belong to each other and that she knew it, but you did not—yet. My horror when I momentarily believed you a criminal was greater than you can conceive. As soon as I became calm I should have known instinctively that you were guiltless, even had you made me no explanation. But what I have said will be held sacred in your honorable keeping. God bless you and preserve you worthy of a happiness that I have never deserved!"

I was touched and sorry for him, but as I walked down Pleasant Street from his club to the Renfrew House I told myself that the whole thing was absurd on the face of it, the morbid fancy of a romantic, unhappy dreamer. If Miss Haliburton had been an impressionable school-girl of sixteen it would be different, but she was a self-possessed, unimaginative young woman of twenty-one, who had had two seasons in London, and doubtless a host of admirers, among whom one had surely touched her heart before this. I quickly dismissed the subject from my mind and my thoughts reverted to the earlier phase of our extraordinary interview, and the flood of recollections it called up. How strangely the mark of Moir's hand seemed to have impressed

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itself on every page of my history since my youth! Had he perhaps been sincere in believing me guilty of an attempt to elope with Mrs. Larpent, or was he, as I had reason to think, simply making a scapegoat of me to divert the husband's suspicions from himself?

I found the major in his chair overcome with sleep, though he would not admit that he had closed an eye.

"Sitting up with the boys?—a sober, steady man like you! Oh, fie, Uncle Lee! Oh, fie!"

"Two o'clock last night, half-past two to-night," he complained. "I can't keep it up long at this rate, sonny. Did you mix too many of their outlandish liquors, or can you say, 'truly rural' and 'constitutional convention'?"

"Try me in the morning," I said, yawning wearily. "Hot Scotch, ale, and claret-cup, not to mention broiled live lobsters, are a severe test of a man's capacity. If I am restless to-night you will know I am seeing snakes, and that a particularly large one, of the variety known as 'snake in the grass,' is coiled directly over my heart."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE remaining ten days of our stay gave me a clearer view of things. Captain Larpent's visions no longer seemed so impossible, for I soon discovered that Oneida was not the experienced society girl I had supposed. Her cousins, Diana and Minerva, who were heiresses, grandchildren of a prominent public man, had been presented at court and were recognized leaders in Halifax society, but their cousin Dido, an orphan, and half American at that, adopted by a maiden aunt in moderate circumstances, was in a very different position. When Sir Everard and Lady Bourke wished to bring out their granddaughters in London society they had taken a house, entertained lavishly, and in turn been extensively entertained. Miss Sophy Bourke, living in modest lodgings in York Place, was unable to bring out her niece in the same style. The cousins were not ungenerous; they invited Dido to their dances and general receptions, and even saw that she had partners provided for her from among ineligible younger sons. At the end of the season each presented her with a cast-off ball-gown, a dinner-dress in fair condition, and several pairs of half-soiled gloves and slippers. These Miss Sophy promptly donated to her maid as perquisites, and Dido was fitted out with new ball-gown, opera-cloak, and accessories from the handsome checks which her queer, unpresentable Yankee uncle sent her every

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Christmas and birthday, but she could count upon her fingers the number of fashionable entertainments she had attended during two London seasons. Sometimes her cousins, who were not musical, sent her tickets to concerts and oratorios which they did not care to use. Aunt Sophy had taken her twice to hear Tietjens in opera ; she had seen three Shakespeare plays and a Christmas pantomime, and Sir Everard had once insisted upon her being included in a party to the Goodwood races. In Halifax, however, things were very different from London. It was not so costly to dress or to entertain in a quiet way ; society was less conventional, the young Haligonian girls were gay and informal, they fancied the gentle, reserved Oneida rather than her stately cousins, and invited her on her own merits to a number of small affairs from which her cousins were omitted, and she was beginning to receive an amount of attention from the young officers and civilians that might easily turn the head of even an experienced society girl.

A large part of this information I obtained from Miss Sophy herself. I accompanied the major almost daily in his visits to the cottage, and, taking it for granted that he wished to walk and talk, to row and ride with his lovely niece, I devoted myself to the aunt. Miss Sophy was an admirable woman, sensible, independent, high-spirited, and so very talkative that I no longer wondered to find Miss Dido somewhat shy and uncommunicative. In her aunt Sophy's companionship she would certainly have little opportunity to develop whatever conversational powers might be latent within her. I could sit by Miss Sophy's side on the lawn, or in the pleasant morning-room and watch with admiring glance the young girl with the figure and bearing of a god-

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dess and the eyes of a Saint Cecilia, while I listened to the lively, garrulous aunt and obtained from her unconscious communicativeness the whole history of her charge's life and education, from the feeding of her infancy to her present social success, from her primer with her first governess to her later instructions from her aunt in the mysteries of housekeeping and marketing and casting of accounts. If Miss Dido did any justice to her instructress she must be well versed in all domestic accomplishments and virtues. I also learned that she had shown signs of temper at five, had passed through a phase of obstinacy at seven, a phase of personal vanity at ten, and a phase of phenomenal piety at twelve. In all of these phases, as well as in scarlet fever and croup, the judicious methods employed by Miss Sophy, of which she gave me detailed account, had obtained the best possible results. This I was quite ready to believe from the evidence before me.

The major's pride and joy in his beautiful niece was something pleasant to witness, and there was a touch of pathos in it as I remembered her to be the daughter of the young woman he had vainly loved. I suspected that he would rather have her marry an American boy and a friend of his own than any of the British officers or Haligonian gentry that waited upon her, but his delicacy was so great that he never hinted his wishes or lifted a finger to bring us together. I found opportunities, however, to pay my court to the shy, gentle, high-bred beauty at some of the many entertainments that marked the close of the season, and with a little patient endeavor I was able to find the subjects she most liked to talk about, and to draw her out of her shell of timidity or reserve. Her uncle Levi's labors among the negroes, my own stories of the legends of the *habitans*, and of

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engineering enterprises on the lakes, and the many deeds of heroism among the workmen and sailors that marked them, these she would listen to from me with shy sympathy and interest, while she grew almost talkative when I asked her about her visits to the National Gallery and the British Museum, her trip to the Irish Lakes and among the English Cathedrals. Her drawings and water-color sketches, which she was prevailed upon to show me, surprised me by the talent they evinced, and by a touch of poetic feeling and imaginativeness which I had not given her credit for. They were not wholly correct in perspective, and as that was my specialty I ventured to suggest an alteration here and there, which she received with angelic grace and humility, while the major, standing by, seemed bursting out of his waistcoat with pride in both of us.

I reviewed the situation as I knelt by my bedside with my forehead resting on my crossed arms, and I lifted my heart with gratitude to God who, in my hour of sore need, had sent this sweet, grave, queenly girl to draw my heart from danger and lead it to paths of peace and virtue. I prayed that I might love her as she deserved to be loved, for it troubled me that there should be so little of the romance and passion of youth in my feeling for her, though the very deliberation with which I had attached myself to her was, in a way, a greater tribute to her worth. It was due to her, however, that I should test my affection and prove its sincerity and truth before I asked her to crown it. I determined to see what a short absence would do, and planned a trip to Annapolis, the Port Royal of historic days, on the shores of the Bay of Fundy, and to the region round Wolfville and the Minas Basin, where the scene of Longfellow's "Evangeline" is laid. If, amid the interest of

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such scenes and away from the influence of her stately beauty, I still felt that I could forget the past at Oneida's side, then how gladly I would return and ask her to accept my life and service.

I called a last time at the cottage to say good-bye before my flight to the land of the Acadians. The good aunt and her niece received me informally in the morning-room up-stairs, a pleasant, airy room, with flowering plants in the bay-window, comfortable chairs, Miss Sophy's work-table, Oneida's easel, and a bookcase in which I detected Scott's novels, expurgated editions of Shakespeare and Byron, the poems of Longfellow, Aubrey de Vere, and Adelaide Proctor, stories by Miss Yonge, Madame Craven, and Lady Georgiana Fullerton, and several books of a devotional character. Miss Sophy did talking enough for the three of us, while I was almost as silent as the handsome girl at her side. When I rose to go, after explaining that it was uncertain whether I should return to the States by way of Halifax or by St. Johns, New Brunswick, and therefore uncertain whether I should see them again, there was no abatement in Miss Sophy's good-natured cordiality, but when Oneida held out her hand to me it was with a cool dignity of manner and a proud flash of the dark-blue eyes that took me aback and made me feel what an intolerably conceited cad I had been to receive so easily Larpent's suggestion that she might be already attracted towards me. I stumbled down the stairway in a deeply chastened frame of mind. That proud, stately girl up-stairs held all my future happiness in her hand, and I had learned in one minute what I had thought it would take me a week of absence and reflection to find out. I was a fool to think of going away when I needed every day and hour of that precious week to try to win her in!

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At the foot of the stairs I discovered that in my confusion I had left my hat and riding-whip in the morning-room. It was embarrassing to return for them after all our adieux had been said, but I could not well ride hatless into the streets of Halifax. I unwillingly mounted the stairs again, inwardly cursing the luck.

The door of the morning-room stood ajar. Within I could see Miss Sophy in her arm-chair, bending caressingly and pityingly over the kneeling figure of Oneida, who, with her face hidden in her aunt's lap, was crying as if her heart would break.

"Oh, Aunt Sophy!" she sobbed. "He does not care for me! He finds me dull! I know he will never, never come back again, and I love him so! I love him so!"

I had only one thought—to escape unobserved! That proud, sweet girl must never know that I had seen her in her humiliation, that I had learned unbidden the holy secrets of her maiden heart. I slid quietly down the banister, tiptoed to the front door, sprang on my horse's back and rode off, all hatless as I was.

I could not go to the city yet, I had other things to think of. I turned my horse's head towards the lonely common to the north. It was bordered by a deep wood of scrub-pine. Into the wood I rode, dismounted and fastened my horse, then threw myself at full length on the ground to think.

My first feeling was one of triumph, of ecstasy! I laughed aloud and hugged myself for joy, then threw out my arms exultantly. This was such a happy, glorious thing that had come to me—to me who had suffered so much disappointment, sorrow, and humiliation in my other affairs of the heart. This queenly girl, so good, so beautiful, so true, loved me,

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me, Rodéric Frémont! I could have her for the asking, even as Larpent had told me! She would be my wife, my own! She was the gift of God to me! the sweet reward, one hundredfold above my deserts, of my poor sacrifices for virtue and duty. I was happy, gloriously happy, strong in hope and manhood, fervent in consecration to God and to her, my stately lily! my beauty! my dear, good girl! my queenly Dido!

My second thought was that Oneida must not shed one unnecessary tear! I had been gone long enough to play my part and allay all possible suspicion of eavesdropping, and now I must return as fast as the prosaic hired animal from the livery-stable would carry me. I took him into my confidence as we trotted along over the common and towards the Arm, for he had witnessed my extraordinary actions in the woods, and I felt that they called for some explanation. So I patted his neck, and bending over him, whispered all sorts of foolish things in his ear, impressing upon him the necessity of keeping my counsel. I came near promising to buy him in the exuberance of my joy, as he seemed part and parcel of my romance, but common-sense came to my rescue in season, and I compromised on a resolution to hire him and him alone for my future rides to my sweetheart's home, for needless to say I had thrown to the winds all thoughts of absenting myself from Halifax. The trip to Acadia should be reserved for my wedding journey. I had no tears for Evangeline until Oneida's should be wiped away forever.

I galloped noisily up the approach to Midfields, and reined in my Rosinante before the cottage, under the window of the morning-room. "Miss Sophy!" I called; "Miss Sophy! come to the window!"

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In a moment the little lady's head was thrust out. She was open-mouthed with surprise.

"Look at me!" I exclaimed. "Just look at me! I galloped half-way into Halifax without a hat on my head! You must think me demented! May I come up and explain?"

"Why, certainly," she said, cordially. "Your hat and whip are here. Dido noticed them after you had been gone fully ten minutes. Come directly up and fetch them."

Again I fastened my horse's bridle to the post. "We didn't think we should be back so soon," I whispered to him. "Now be good and don't listen! I'll tell you all when I come down again," and I could have vowed that the beast winked at me.

Miss Sophy was in the morning-room with my things in her hand. She was alone, but the door into the inner room was half open, and I suspected that Oneida had taken refuge there, and that it was her shadow that fell across the doorway. I went round and stood near that door, but with my back to it, facing Miss Sophy.

"You will not wonder that I forgot my hat when I tell you all," I said. "Miss Sophy, I have given up my trip! I cannot leave here, at least I cannot unless you tell me it is useless for me to stay, and send me away forever. I knew when I planned to leave that I loved your niece, but thought I ought to test my new affection, for I had loved once before—a little playmate with whom I grew up in Detroit and Paris. She married four years ago, and I was not sure that I had forgotten her as I should forget. But I had hardly said good-bye, I had not crossed the threshold of your door, before I knew that I was a fool to think I needed any test. Your niece has my whole heart and my whole life in her hands,

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and I have come back to ask your leave to devote every moment of the short time that is left me to try to win her, to try to gain some word of hope—”

There was a little stifled cry behind me; I turned and saw Dido standing there, her cheeks flushed red, her beautiful, shy eyes swimming in tears, her hands outstretched. I sprang towards her, and in a moment her arms were around my neck and her lips raised to meet mine, I was clasping her as if I could never let her go, and Aunt Sophy in the background was murmuring incoherent words of blessing and happiness.

Two hours later I returned to our rooms to find the major fretting himself into a heat over my tardiness.

“Well, this beats the Dutch!” he exclaimed. “To see you sauntering in as cool as a cucumber, the carpet-bags lying there, and the train gone half an hour ago!”

“Let it go, Uncle Leel!” I cried, joyfully. “Let all the trains in the world go to Jericho if they wish to! I do not stir from this blessed spot! I have a message for you from Miss Sophy. You are to come right back with me to Midfields to tea, for Dido has something very important to tell you!”

I do not think I had fully realized till then the strength of this good man’s affection for me. I did not deserve, no frail man could wholly deserve, the things he said of me, but the one object of his lonely life was his beautiful niece, and if he had been attached to me before for my own sake he now loved me doubly and trebly for hers. It humbled me to see with what whole-souled confidence he laid her hand in mine. It must have been partly owing to the glamour cast by the name of Frémont; for what was there in my unheroic character and commonplace attainments to inspire such trust and love in this strong,

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homely man, who had seen men and knew the life and works of men both in their greatness and their littleness as few know them?

But there was one feature of the affair that seemed to mystify him. "I declare to reason I don't see how you done it," he said at last, after much frowning and puzzled thought. "It beats all how you done your courtin'. Appeared all the time like you war courtin' the old lady, and didn't care a hill o' beans to be near the young one. We done things different in my day."

"I did it in the old French way, Uncle Lee," I replied, laughing gleefully. "I will teach you how it is done. You talk to the parents and get on the right side of them, and this gives the girl a chance to watch you and think what a nice young man you are and how much she wishes you were talking to her. Then there is generally some third person, a friend of yours, who goes with the girl and praises you up behind your back and makes her think better of you than ever—"

His mouth opened wide and he stared at me blankly for a moment; then he smiled from ear to ear.

"Robert," he remarked, "you air powerful sly! I wouldn't 'a' thought it of you! You took me in, and I done yo'r courtin' for you without knowin' it! You didn't need to give me no instructions, for you knew yo'r reputation war safe with me. Come to think, I used ter notice her eyes, them deep, shy eyes o' her'n, kinder travellin' round in yo'r direction a good deal, and it used to make me mad that you didn't seem to see 'em. But, Lor', *you saw!* and what odds does it make *how* you done it so long as you *done* it!"

CHAPTER XXIV

BEFORE the major and I left Nova Scotia it was arranged that Oneida should visit her uncle in the States and that we should be married there during the Christmas holidays. This plan seemed to satisfy every one. Sir Everard and Lady Bourke had indeed offered, rather faintly, to have the wedding-breakfast at the Hall, as Miss Sophy's cottage was too small for the necessary number of relatives and intimate friends, but their relief was very apparent when Major Haliburton put in his claim. He was her father's only brother, and had long urged Dido to make him a visit. It would be very proper that she should make this visit now, as it would be the nearest thing to being married from her own father's house, and Miss Sophy herself would be there to represent the mother. I also ventured to put in a word from my own point of view. My grandfather, my only living relative, would wish to see my marriage. At his advanced age—eighty-five—hale and hearty as he was, a winter's voyage to Nova Scotia would be very dangerous, especially in view of his having had inflammation of the lungs the preceding spring. This decided the matter, Sir Everard and Lady Bourke withdrawing their claims with graceful alacrity.

The major and I left Halifax full of the happiest anticipations. A number of my friends came down to see me off and offer me their congratulations, among them Captain Larpent.

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"Do not ask me to the wedding," he said, with his peculiar, sad smile. "I will do much for you, Frémont, but I draw the line at that. I have half a mind to sell out and go to my children. I think that before Christmas you will hear of me on the ocean, homeward bound. You see I have given up the comedy I was playing. I am going to admit my children behind the scenes and dispel their innocent illusions. Better the truth from me than from a cruel world. Poor chaps!"

My letters, overflowing with happiness and with descriptions of Oneida's grace and goodness, had reached my grandfather a few days ahead of my arrival in Detroit, and he was prepared to give me all the affectionate sympathy I asked, though there was a tinge of sadness underneath that troubled me.

"It is right that you should marry, Rodéric, my boy," he said, "right from every point of view. I approve of youthful marriages, the younger the better, and I should have liked you to marry at twenty-one if she had been old enough." He did not specify what "she" he had in mind. "We have been very happy together, my child, but the old man will be passing away soon, and he will be glad to bless the new household before he goes. There are a few things of your angel mother's I should have liked to keep till I went, but it is right that you should have some memorials of her in the new home."

"The new home!" I stammered. "Why, Pépé, shall we not live with you? I have described the old house to Oneida till she knows its every nook and corner. It is her wish that you should sit at the head of your table and I at the foot, as we have always done, and she will be between us as our sweet guest. She would not wish you to feel that her coming made

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any change, except in our having her companionship."

"Impractical young lovers!" he smiled, shaking his head sadly. "That would do in France, where the old families still live in the patriarchal system, three generations in the home at once, the old people providing for the household needs, the younger ones rearing their families. But the New World has different ideals. In justice to Oneida you must consider a little how it will appear to the society in which she should take her place if you bring her to this old homestead. The Detroit ladies who have entertained you at their houses, those with whom you have danced and dined, will call upon your bride, and where will she receive them? Save the kitchen and offices, we have but two rooms on the lower floor, the plain, old-fashioned dining-room, and this big, shabby sitting-room, fitted up with all the odd notions that come to two old bachelors. Is this a proper drawing-room for a beautiful young bride?"

"You do not alarm me in the least, Pépé," I said, resolutely. "I am not so unpractical as you suppose. I have thought it all out. Our surroundings will make no difference to our old family friends, those of French traditions and faith, who will be always our friends no matter where or how we live, and they are, like ourselves, the true Detroiters, the children of the pioneers. What care we for the opinion of the new-comers, who are almost strangers to us? Besides, Pépé, there is the tower-room, off the first landing of the stairs, which we have been using for a store-room. We did not care for it because it had not the river view, but now that there is nothing to be seen from the front windows but the Nain Rouge" (for this was the name we had given to that eye-sore, the red-brick factory), "the view over the garden is

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really the prettiest of any, and the tower-room is just the size for a bride's boudoir."

My grandfather became so interested in the project of fitting up the tower-room that he quite forgot his other objections. After all, the house had been comfortable enough for his wife and his daughter in the old days, and had then been considered a handsome residence. The sitting-room, with its fine dimensions—thirty-five feet in length by twenty in breadth—had been the scene of many gay dances and hospitable entertainments, while many a feast had been served at the cheerful board in the big, square dining-room. The hall, which cut through the whole width of the house, was spacious and dignified, while opposite the entrance was the wide, low staircase, with a large landing half-way up opening into an octagonal tower-room which had been my grandfather's study thirty years before when the ladies monopolized the drawing-room. But ever since I could remember it had been used as a place of refuge for all things useless, and the drawing-room had degenerated into a sort of rough-and-ready abode for a lonely man and boy. I would not change its character while my grandfather lived, or disturb one inch his special chairs and tables and the hiding-places of his pipes and books and secret treasures, but the hall and the dining-room might be refurnished to advantage, while the tower-room could be charmingly fitted out in modern style as a reception-room worthy of a lovely young bride.

The day after my return I resolved to call on the Chaberts and receive their good wishes. There would be a slight embarrassment in meeting Étienne which it would be best to have over as soon as possible.

"Have you told the Chaberts?" I asked of my grandfather.

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"Told them what?" queried the old gentleman, slyly.

"The one only really important thing in the world," I replied, nothing daunted.

"I have told Nita, and she has told the others, who have all been over to give me their felicitations. Your letter came the day before she went away," and the Chevalier eyed me very intently from under his shaggy eyebrows.

"Went away?" I echoed. "Has she gone?"

"Her father feels worried about her," said my grandfather, somewhat gloomily. "She seemed happy enough to be here among her own again, but a few days before you came home she suddenly took it into her head that it was her duty to be near her husband so that she could go to him if anything happened."

"Where is he now?" I asked, rather faintly.

"He is travelling up in the Northern Peninsula with Mr. Arthur, a young physician, and a valet who is really his keeper. They are camping and fishing upon Lake Superior, and they hope that the out-of-door life and freedom from business worries will restore his health and mental balance. Nita is visiting the McNiffs, who are now settled in Marquette, so that she may be within easy reach of her husband if he should send for her."

I had never thought of the possibility of his getting well and of her going back to him. Of course, if the physicians pronounced him cured it would be her duty to return to her husband, yet I remembered how little faith Dr. Netley had in the chances of a permanent cure, and it seemed to me that her relatives ran a terrible risk in allowing her to live with him again. But I told myself sharply that it was none of my business, that her father was her natural

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guardian, that I had my own responsibilities now, and other people must shoulder theirs.

Fortunately I had plenty of work on hand, blessed work, a sovereign relief in so many ills. My plans and specifications for the Delft Harbor improvements had been accepted, and the contracts made by the Survey Office, so that I had to set forth almost immediately to superintend the dredging and straightening of the channel, the building of the breakwater, and the laying of the foundations of the light-house before winter set in.

As was my custom, I superintended personally every inch of the construction and shared all the exposure with my workmen. A succession of early autumnal gales, striking us before the stone foundations for the light-house were properly cemented, threatened to undo the labor of weeks by submerging or dragging from its moorings the huge iron cylinder which we had driven into the sand and which was riveted to huge piles forming a sort of exterior breakwater. It was a herculean task to keep this cylinder dry, and more than once we spent the whole night in water, holding on to ropes and pulleys, while the great surges of Lake Michigan, rolling in upon us in foam-blown masses twenty feet in height, swept us off our feet again and again. We were clad in life-preservers and lashed to the great wooden piles, otherwise many lives would have been lost in those ice-cold, raging seas. But we triumphed! We were numb and bruised, but our great cylinder stood its ground against the sledge-hammer blows, and when the surface water grew calmer and we removed the enormous tarpaulins that covered it not a pint of water had forced its way into the interior, not a stone was ever so little jarred from its setting. Workmen, foremen, contractors, and engineer, we hugged each

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other for joy and indulged in a very riot of shouting and cheering, while the old lake frowned and tossed and sullenly surrendered to the power of man, till the sun shone forth after days of gloom and caressed it into a gentler, friendlier, happier mood.

It was late in November before the work was brought to a point where we could leave it for the winter. Oneida and her aunt were now in North Carolina, where the major was in the seventh heaven of happiness preparing his house for the wedding and lavishing presents upon his beautiful niece. Like many timid, reserved natures, Oneida wrote more freely than she talked. Her letters were long, descriptive, flowing on smoothly and pleasantly, with an unexpected touch of dry humor here and there, and much shy tenderness. I kissed the precious missives and slept with them under my pillow, an ever-increasing pile, which I carefully hid by day from the prying eyes of the landlady of the Delft Tavern.

When we touched at St. Ignace on the homeward voyage, I was met by Émile McNiff.

"Rory, there is a job that you positively must do for us. We will have no denial. You know I am now superintendent of the Redoubtable Mine, and we have a scheme on foot for getting at the rich beds of ore under the adjoining lake."

"But I am not a mining engineer," I interrupted. "I know nothing whatever of metallurgy."

"That is not the question," explained McNiff. "The ore is there all right. What we want you to do is to see if it is practicable to drain the lake and to divert the streams that feed it into some other basin, and to estimate the cost of such an undertaking. This sort of thing is in your line, and it will be a big contract. You have lost so much money in mines you ought to make some out of this one. Did you

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know that the Forest Lake Copper Mine is coining money for us hand over hand? What a pity you ever sold out your shares in it to Moir, who has millions enough already from other sources!"

"Sold out!" I echoed bitterly. Then I stopped myself. Let bygones be bygones! Émile evidently had no notion of the true state of affairs, and, as he was working for a company in which Moir was a director and one of the largest shareholders, it was best he should remain in ignorance.

"Is Mrs. Moir still with you and your wife?" I asked after a while, hesitatingly.

"She went to join her husband about three weeks ago," he replied. "He is as right as a trivet now. In fact, he never was mentally wrong, only in a very nervous condition from business worry. He is just as well to-day as you or I. Étienne will cheer up now, I hope, for she seemed awfully sad when she was with us. She is plucky and tried not to show it, but she could not deceive me, who have known her from a child, though she is queer, like all women. For instance, she kept up as bravely as possible all through the harrowing anxiety about Moir, and then, when she got news that he was well and wanted her to join him, she broke down and went all to pieces—got hysterical, and all that sort of thing. My wife firmly believes that Étienne fears and dislikes her husband, and was frantic at the thought of having to live with him again, but I tell her that is nonsense. All women cry when they ought to laugh, and laugh when they ought to cry, and you should always judge them by contraries."

Now that I knew I should not have to see Étienne again, I consented to Émile's proposition. Émile was an old friend and the playmate of my childhood, and I disliked to refuse him, especially as it was

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evident that he was hoping to do me a good turn and compensate me in some degree for my losses in the other mine.

We went into the hill country of the interior, in the Gogebic Range, where such treasures of iron ore were being brought to the surface. The great Redoubtable Iron Mine was the most extensively worked at that time of any in the range. We found the director and his wife were entertaining a party of Eastern ladies and gentlemen who had mining interests in that region, and it was proposed that we should visit the famous mine before I made my inspection of the neighboring lake reservation. It was with a shock of dismay, when, too late to withdraw, I discovered that the party included Mr. and Mrs. Montgomerie Moir!

CHAPTER XXV

I HAD a warm greeting and a few hurried words of congratulation from Étienne, who struck me as looking thin and anxious, but Moir appeared in far better physical condition than when I had last seen him, and seemed quite composed in manner. He apparently retained no recollection of our last meeting, though I remembered Dr. Netley's prediction, and found myself nervously dreading some catastrophe, and resolved to keep well out of his way.

I had never been down a mine in my life, and the little hole in the ground, looking like a trap-door, that served as the entrance to the Redoubtable Mine, aroused no adventurous desires in my breast. Had the ladies not persevered in their wish to descend, I would gladly have given up the enterprise. It was a strange and not a particularly pleasant sensation to feel ourselves shut up in an iron cage, which, slanting backwards, did not permit of our standing upright, but left us propped against the sides as it sped obliquely down in darkness into the bowels of the earth. We were to stop at the ninth level, six hundred and seventy-five feet below the earth's surface. When we were released from the cage the sense of suffocation and imprisonment left us and a feeling of adventure took its place. Clad in miners' rubber coats and helmets, with dripping candles fastened upright to the crown, we wandered through caves and galleries, sometimes in high, vaulted chambers, sometimes stooping under low arches and picking

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our way over pools in the uneven flooring. We sang and listened to the echo of our voices along the rocky galleries, we laughed at each other's comical appearance, our faces blackened by the smoke of candles and torches, the water dripping from the brims of our helmets. We were a merry enough party when, an hour later, we found ourselves standing by the cage ready to seek the upper air. The ladies entered first, Warren, Wynne, and McNiff followed. Moir held me back.

"The ladies were a little crowded coming down," he said to the superintendent. "Mr. James, will you please take up this load and send the cage down later? Mr. Frémont and I will go up on the second trip."

Oh, what a thing it is to have a fearful heart! I was filled with a mad desire to fling myself into the cage and beg for protection. I was sick with terror at the thought of staying alone with that man—alone, with seven hundred feet of solid rock above our heads, out of reach of human hearing or aid. With a super-human effort I controlled myself outwardly. For very shame I dared not show the fear I felt. Suddenly a light figure sprang out of the cage.

"I shall stick by Mr. Moir," said Étienne, gayly. "It would never do to separate husband and wife! There will now be room for one more," and her eyes signalled to me to take her place in the cage.

I would have given all I possessed to be able to do so, but I could not. I would rather have died than show myself the coward I really was, so I stood my ground and shrugged my shoulders with affected indifference.

"What a pitiable creature a poor bachelor is!" I sighed. "Is there no one to stick by me? Ladies, I appeal to you!"

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"Oh, Mr. Frémont, we would all love to," called back the lively Mrs. Wynne, "but what can we do? We are married, and, what is worse, our husbands are with us!"

We all laughed gayly as the cage sped up. I watched it out of sight, then, drawing myself to my full height and whistling "*Dans les Prisons de Nantes*" to show my courage (Heaven save the mark!), I became profoundly interested in doctoring my candle, which was flickering in the draught and unloading tallow on my neck.

Étienne made a wild effort at hilarity, in which I was unable to help her out. She recalled many of the comical incidents of the expedition, laughed anew over the trite witticisms as she repeated them, and endeavored, with a heroism I could admire but not emulate, to close the dreadful gulf of silence that lay between us three. Moir was absolutely dumb, and I could only speak in monosyllables and second her efforts at gayety by a hollow smile. Oh, what providence had permitted me to come into this dreadful place? Why could I not have foreseen some such predicament as the present?

It seemed an hour before the cage returned, though it could not have been over ten minutes. I breathed more freely. We should be safe now, for with the superintendent present I need have no physical fear. We were both stalwart men, and able, together, to meet almost any danger I could foresee. But as I stepped towards the cage I saw with dismay that it was empty! The engineer had let it down from above without thought of danger below.

We stepped into the little prison, first Étienne, then I, then Moir, who pulled the valve that gave the signal whistle to the engineer above. To my horror the cage began to glide slowly downwards. I

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could not control a start of surprise. Moir gave a chuckle, and his restless eyes gleamed in the semi-darkness. Étienne turned ashy pale, and for one second closed her eyes and leaned against the back of the cage. Then she roused herself.

"How perfectly ridiculous!" she exclaimed, with a ghastly little laugh. "Why, Monty, you gave the wrong signal! Here, let me pull the valve. What is the up signal?"

I did not know. I had taken it for granted the superintendent would return for us, and had not thought it necessary to inquire, but, had I known it, I could hardly have used it, for Moir put his hand before the valve and stood there with the same wicked chuckle upon his lips. I felt that I must avoid as long as possible any hand-to-hand struggle with a madman in that little iron cage seven hundred feet under ground. Étienne gave a gasp, the forced laugh died on her white lips, she tottered and fell back against the cage half fainting.

I felt that we were descending more slowly, then, in a hesitating sort of way, the car came to a standstill. The engineer above doubtless suspected that there had been a mistake in the signal. Moir and I stood in deathly stillness watching each other. His shifty eye avoided a direct gaze into mine, but I looked steadily into his face and held myself ready. Thank God! with a slight trembling motion the thing began to mount. Moir fell to cursing and swearing, and sprang at the valve like a wild-cat, but I was too quick for him and had caught his wrists before he reached it. Something in me rose to meet the struggle. We were mounting, that was the great thing; each moment we were nearer safety, and if I could only hold my own for three, four minutes, we should be in God's free air, among our friends again, and

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all would be well. But his strength was fearful. I had felt the force of his grip once before ; now I was almost powerless under it. In an instant he had tripped me up and forced me upon my knees. I must continue the struggle, however feebly, enough to keep his hands occupied so that he could not reach the valve. We passed the ninth level in our upward flight, then the eighth, the seventh—I was growing horribly weak, the pain in my muscles was intense, I was losing my hold on his wrists. We were nearing the sixth level, only the sixth! Oh, God! could I hold out for five more? My eyes grew dim, my hands slipped on his wrists, my joints seemed to crack under me, and as we reached the door of the sixth level he wound his arms around me, lifted me from my knees, and threw me out into the darkness.

As the cage glided up I saw Nita's unconscious figure fallen in a heap in one corner, I heard his derisive laugh, I screamed wildly for aid. As if my voice could have penetrated the solid rock, I hurled curses after his disappearing form, I crawled as near as I dared to the shaft and shouted with the full force of my lungs. For a moment I was beside myself with terror and rage. I was suffocated, I could not breathe, I could have beaten my head in helpless agony against the rocks. I grew hoarse and weak and fell trembling to the floor. Gradually I became capable of reasoning and of controlling myself. Of course I should be missed and the cage would return for me. Of course! I could almost laugh at myself for my foolish terrors of the moment before. It was a mere question of minutes!

But how slowly the minutes passed, how deadly damp it was, how damply dark! I was as full of nervous fancies as an hysterical woman. I crouched down in the gloom with a feeling that nameless, in-

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tangible horrors surrounded me. I dared not strike a match for fear I might see—I knew not what! I hardly dared to breathe, but I listened in an agony of attention for some sound that would betoken the approach of my rescuers. I trembled violently, and it felt as if my heart were failing to beat. I should have liked to consult my watch, for it seemed as if hours were passing and no sound broke the subterranean stillness save the drip, dripping of congealed moisture, yet I decided to remain in ignorance of the time rather than call into being weird shadows by the uncertain light of a match. But the nightmare sense of suffocation grew on me till it seemed as if I must scream and shout, and pound with my fists against the sharp, cruel rocks. What had happened above that I was left to my fate? Had Moir killed Étienne? Was she dead and he insane, and all the others so occupied with that tragedy that I was forgotten and left to die here by slow tortures? Was my life to end thus—was I to rot here in all my youth and strength, with all life's best joys and triumphs waiting for me?

I screamed aloud in terror, but the sound echoed so wildly through the rocky corridors that it gave me a sudden fear that I, too, might be going insane. With a tremendous effort I controlled myself. Suppose I were forgotten, what then? Let me face the worst and consider it calmly. True, I might die, but then we must all die. Was the slow torture of starvation so much worse than the ravages of disease? Did not men die in agony on battle-fields, in hospitals, by sea and by land, in the house of friends, or in the hands of enemies? What had not been suffered by martyrs in times of persecution? Why should not I have to endure what others had endured? The God who knew of the fall of a spar-

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row, and who valued me more than many sparrows, knew of my need. If I perished He was yet with me, His arms around me, as surely as if I lay in my bed with sorrowing friends about me. What difference did it make to Him whether the walls of a mine or the walls of a chamber surrounded His child at the hour of its soul's release? My God, my Father, was with me, and in a few more hours the manner of my departure would be as nothing to me also, when I should fall worshipping at His feet and He should gather me to His heart! "Oh, God!" I murmured, "I believe! Help Thou mine unbelief!"

I knelt and said my evening prayers. I had been taught in my childhood to say them each night as sincerely and fervently as if I expected to die in my sleep, and so I said them now, quietly, peacefully. I felt as I never felt before the love of Father, Saviour, Comforter! I was not alone in the depths from which I cried! God and His angels, the gentle Virgin Mother, and all the glorious company of heaven kept watch with me in my vigil in the bowels of the earth till, overcome with weakness and weariness, I stretched myself out on the rocky floor and pressed my lips to my scapular, murmuring the words of the compline prayer, "Save me, O Lord, waking, and keep me while I sleep, that I may watch with Christ and rest in peace! Keep me as the apple of Thine eye, and protect me under the shadow of Thy wings! Into Thy hands—"

I knew no more. They tell me that when they found me, the next morning, I was sleeping as soundly and sweetly as a child, with a smile upon my lips.

CHAPTER XXVI

THEY removed me, all weak and shaken as I was, to the superintendent's house, where Émile and his wife cared for me with affectionate assiduity. They could hardly be persuaded I was uninjured save for a strained wrist and general stiffness, and they reiterated their dismay and horror at learning of what had happened.

"We had all driven over here expecting you and the Moirs to follow. Then came a confused report that Mrs. Moir had been frightened by the cage starting to go down instead of up, that she had been brought to the surface in hysterics, and that Moir had insisted on putting her aboard the train for Marquette, that she might have a physician's care. When you did not return we supposed you had gone with them."

"When did you first learn that I was missing?" I asked.

"This warned us," said Émile. It was a telegram dated from Marquette:

"Make sure that R. F. is safe. He fell off cage. Do not answer this. We sail for Europe Saturday. E. M."

"Imagine our horror!" exclaimed Émile's wife. "No wonder poor Mrs. Moir was hysterical. I was nearly so myself when I read it. To think of Moir's not having told any one! To be sure he was awfully upset and nervous about his wife, but to my mind it goes to prove what I have always maintained, that

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he is not right in his head, otherwise his forgetfulness would have been nothing short of criminal. I don't think the man is safe, and I have written Dr. Chabert all about it. If he lets Étienne go abroad alone with Moir he will be an unnatural father."

"I am so glad you wrote. When did you send the letter?" I asked, eagerly.

"I wrote while they were searching for you," she replied. "The telegram came in the early morning, but it took them two hours to find you, as they had no idea at which level you had fallen off or whether they should not perhaps find your remnants at the bottom of the shaft. I dashed off a postscript at the end to say that you were found and not much hurt, only bruised and shaken from the fall and shock, and I hurried it off by this noon's train."

"God bless you for your promptness!" I said, kissing her hand gratefully. She was Marie Louise Lagardère, from over the river, who had known the Chaberts all her life, and it was very natural for her to write her fears and warnings to the doctor. Had she not written I must have done so, but it came better from her.

Two days later Mrs. McNiff received a despatch from Dr. Chabert:

"Thank God for R.'s safety. Your letter conclusive. I leave to-night for New York to prevent departure, or sail with them."

From this I knew that Étienne was now safe, for her father had been sceptical at best of Moir's cure, and, now that he was thoroughly awake to the danger of his daughter's position, would leave no stone unturned to secure the safety of this idolized child. I ought to have been at rest about her and to have dismissed her from my mind, but the adventure in the mine had shaken my nerves almost beyond my control,

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and her image was ever before me. By day I labored over the engineering problem assigned to me; I explored to their source the streams that fed the lake, I sounded the lake-bed, I examined its shores; and ever in its placid waters, or mirrored from its brown tributaries, I saw the fainting form of Étienne, and her dark eyes turned on me with a gaze of anguish. In the evening, when I rested from my labor, I brought out Dido's sweet letters and read them again and again till a feeling of deep peace stole over me and, taking up my pen, I could write her my daily journal of events and add loving words to tell her how happy her letters made me, how all my life's joy was in her, and how I looked forward with ardent longing to the rapidly approaching day that would unite us two forever. Then I would seek slumber after my fatigue, and when it came to me it was troubled by broken dreams and agonized visions, and ever in them Étienne's face, with eyes of anguish and imploring hands, and I would awaken to find my pillow wet with tears.

I wrote to my grandfather to hurry the preparations for my marriage and for our journey to the South, for I felt sure that these disturbed dreams were largely the nervous after-effects of my adventures in the mine and that change of scene and Dido's sweet companionship would quickly set me right. Two letters that reached me during this period contributed to restore more normal conditions. The first was from Captain Larpent, accompanying a present to me of some books, and written in a happy, hopeful vein. He had sent his resignation and broken up his housekeeping, and was to sail shortly for England, where he hoped to spend many happy years in the companionship of his boys, devoted to their education and enjoyment. He wished me every blessing and

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desired me to know that he was happier than he had been for many a year, and was sure he was doing the right thing. He was at peace with all men and ready to take up the duties and blessings that life still held out to him in abundant measure.

The other letter was from Dr. Chabert, written the morning of the day they were to sail for England.

"I shall never let Nita live with him again," he wrote. "I have no faith in his permanent cure, and it would simply be courting a tragedy to throw her in his power. He will be apparently free, but actually under the strictest surveillance during the voyage, and as soon as we reach England he will be put in charge of a famous alienist, and I will at once take Nita to the Continent, and give her the rest, the change of scene, and the entire freedom from harrowing fear and anxiety which the poor little girl so sadly needs. My poor, brilliant Nita! to think that she should have led such a life! all her graces and accomplishments wasted, her health and spirits crushed! She never speaks of it; she is brave and self-contained, and she seems fearless enough where she alone is concerned, but it seems that he has borne you a grudge ever since the old days in Paris, and she has always feared a tragic termination. Why he did not kill you when he had you in his power in New York is something I do not understand, except as one of the vagaries of an unbalanced mind. She had great difficulty in sending off her telegram to Émile McNiff about the trouble in the mine, as her husband hardly stirred from her side, but she succeeded in giving him the slip. She would not have told me this much, for her notions of loyalty and secrecy have always been quixotically high, had not Marie Louise Lagardère's letter given me the clew, so that I could question her to the point."

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I was glad and relieved, indeed, to feel that the dear little friend and playmate I had so long and so truly loved was safe under her father's protecting care, and would never again be exposed to the terrors and trials of her past life. At best her life could never be a happy one, but, when I thought of the richness of the blessings that were to be showered on mine, I felt less reluctance to accept and enjoy them now that Étienne was relieved of the heaviest of her burdens.

For I think I knew instinctively that Marie Louise McNiff was right when she declared that Étienne hated and feared her husband, and that the heaviest cross of her life had been not his illness but his recovery, and the duty it imposed upon her of returning to him. And I think I also knew instinctively, though never would I admit it to myself in so many words, that it was his injustice to me, his persecution of me, her childhood's love, that first embittered her against her husband. So much the more was it to her honor that she had done her duty towards him so faithfully—that she had ever guarded his good name so scrupulously. Not even to her own father would she turn for sympathy, when it involved making known to him the sins and failings of the man whose wife she had become. Not in her father's home would she seek refuge when it would bring her into companionship with me, for I also knew that it was not for my peace of mind only that she had left her father's roof and gone nearer to her post of duty. Thank God, that duty would now be relieved of its dangers and terrors, and she would be as happy with her father, travelling amid scenes of Old World interest, as she could ever hope to be while Moir lived.

At the end of another week I returned to Detroit. It had been decided to have the wedding at Major Haliburton's North Carolina plantation, where we

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would all pass the Christmas holidays together, after which I would take my beautiful bride to her new home on the blue Detroit.

"Well, Rodéric, how do you like it?"

My dear grandfather! He led me to the door of the big sitting-room with an air of mystery, and then stepped aside to let me look in. I could only throw my arms around him and tell him how good he was. I had thought it would be trial enough to him to have the hall and tower-room decorated and the dining-room refurnished, but of his own accord and wholly unknown to me he had had our bachelor sitting-room remodelled during my absence, and a truly delightful room it now was to my masculine eye. It still retained the character of a library and an air of great comfort, but, though all the old landmarks were there, it was wonderful how much it was altered and improved since the stately solid-mahogany furniture had been freshly upholstered in rich but subdued colors, the walls newly papered, the oak floor polished, and heavy Turkish rugs put in the place of the threadbare carpet. A large bay-window thrown out on the side towards the flower-garden, and containing a dainty inlaid work-table and lady's writing-desk, gave a feminine touch to the room which sent a thrill of happy anticipation to my heart.

"Your grandmother's," explained the Chevalier, and I felt how much it had meant to him to have these sacred mementos brought to life and prepared again for woman's use.

The night before we started for New York was icy cold. A light snow had fallen and covered the landscape like a winding-sheet and the white moonlight streamed cold and chill over all things. There was something unearthly in the aspect of nature, and I

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was visited by a sense of oppression. The memory of Alix haunted me; I seemed to see her lying in her icy bed in the river's depth, and for once I was glad that I could not see the heartless stream, for once I rejoiced in the shadow of that hideous wall of red brick into which I gazed across the lawn from my bedroom. Sleep would not visit my eyes that night, and I rose and wandered half-way down the stairs to the landing from which the tower-room, now a pretty bridal boudoir, opened. The shades were all raised and the silver moonlight fell ghostly and chill across the floor; the walls were shrouded in shadow. An ottoman in the centre of the room had been hastily covered with a sheet to preserve it fresh from dust till the bride's arrival, but it looked so hideously like a maiden's bier in its white drapery that I tore at the sheet wildly and flung it far away. As I did so a distant sound fell on my ear and smote my heart with heaviness—the long, deep baying of a hound over *la Côte du Nord*! At that moment a gust of icy wind swept past the house, and a shadow fell on the moonlit floor, the shadow of a cloud driving across the face of the moon! I clapped my hands to my eyes. I would not look up nor out. If the Spectral Hunt was abroad that night it should not be for me; my eyes must not see it, lest it bring danger to my dear ones. Still shading my face with one hand I groped with the other for the window-blinds, that I might shut out that ghostly light from the bridal-room. I touched something cold, I know not what, but instantly a wild terror possessed me, and, turning, I fled to my room and threw myself shivering upon the bed. Then I drew the coverlet over my head and pressed my face deep down into the pillows, that I might shut out from my ears the ominous sound of a dog's baying over *la Côte du Nord*!

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Not till the moonlight had paled before the coming of gray, wintry dawn did I fall asleep. It was far past our usual breakfast hour when I came down into the dining-room. My grandfather was not there, but I heard voices in the adjoining kitchen and moved towards the doorway, where I saw him standing in the middle of the room listening to old French Kate and three or four *habitans* from the Grosse Pointe farms. They were talking excitedly, interrupting each other, but the burden of their testimony was all the same—that the Chasse Galère had been abroad that night, that the Spectral Huntsman had steered his phantom canoe in the clouds directly over our house, and that not an *habitan* from Hamtramck to l'Anse Creuse had closed an eye the livelong night for the baying of the Huntsman's Hound over la Côte du Nord!

"Shut your mouths, with your infernal superstitions!" stormed my grandfather. "If some lunatic dog bayed at the moon you should have had the sense to get up and turn over your slipper three times in silence. But you are a pack of idiots!"

They were no idiots! They had turned over their slippers with all the proper formalities, but this was no dog of flesh and blood barking at the moon, this was Chasseur, the Phantom Huntsman's hound, and not amenable to ordinary measures. Some calamity threatened.

"Pst! V'là M'sieu Rodéric, zo pale like h' won zheet!" and all heads turned towards the doorway where I stood listening.

"M'sieu Rodéric, she h' also 'ave 'ear Chasseur! Not?" they asked. "Tees den dat bimeby some t'ings go 'appen!"

"Silence!" commanded my grandfather. "You must not even mention such superstitions! You

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know the Church forbids your having any dealings with signs and dreams, and all the stuff and nonsense of your fancies."

Assuredly, the Church forbade superstition, they all knew that. But had not the good God Himself permitted them, one and all, to witness with their eyes and hear with their ears the things whereof they spoke, and, if He permitted these things, was it for them to say they were only superstitions?

But my grandfather did not stay to argue. He pushed me into the dining-room, and, following after, closed the door, leaving the disputants to talk the matter over among themselves. He urged me to eat some breakfast and freely cursed the folly of the *habitans*.

"Ridiculous nonsense!" he fumed. "One old gibbering idiot somewhere thinks she saw a queer-shaped cloud—a likely enough thing on a windy night—and the whole lot of moonstruck zanies immediately think they have seen the same thing. Heaven knows I'm a light sleeper, but I heard nothing." Then, after a pause, "Did you hear anything, Rodéric?" he added, anxiously.

"I believe I remember waking up long enough to hear a loony old cur making night hideous somewhere in the distance," I replied, evasively. "Somebody ought to have shot him and not let him keep the neighborhood awake."

In spite of the energy with which he disclaimed any faith in signs, I could see that my grandfather felt uneasy. Not until we were driving into the city to take the train, however, did he acknowledge the feeling, as he turned to give a last look towards the old place.

"We have grown old together, the house and I," he said, huskily. "I don't know why, Rory, my

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boy, unless those confounded idiots have shaken my nerves with their fool stories, but I have the blues this evening, and I feel as if I should never see the old home again."

"If you feel that way," I said, "we will drive directly back and you shall not leave it at all."

"But I must see your wedding," he exclaimed; "I would rather never see the house again than lose that sight."

"Oneida shall come on, and we'll have the wedding here," I said, sturdily. "Women have done as much as that before for the men they loved. I would go to the ends of the earth to win her, and think it but a small thing to do, but I have confidence enough in her good sense and her affection to ask her to come to me instead, if there is sufficient reason for it."

"Nonsense!" said my grandfather, angrily. "There is no reason for it at all! A mad dog, a pack of moonstruck *habitans* interrupting my breakfast, and too many *croquecignolles* have combined to give me an indigestion, that is all. You shall not fail in chivalry to your future wife for the vagaries of a dyspeptic old man."

CHAPTER XXVII

WE took the long journey to North Carolina by easy stages, stopping a few days in Cincinnati and Washington on the way. The time passed all too slowly for me, who was as impatient a lover as ever sighed for his wedding-day. Dido, my queenly Dido, loved me, and had changed the face of the world for me, and in return I loved her with a tenderness and devotion that surprised even myself. I could smile now to think I had ever feared my love for her lacking in warmth. I laughed scornfully at the recollection.

At Richmond I purchased the New York papers of the previous day, and, leaving my grandfather to himself for a time, went to the smoking compartment, and, finding it empty, had stretched myself comfortably on the lounge to read, when my eye fell on the startling headlines of the first sheet: "Was it murder? Tragedy on an ocean steamship! Well-known New York millionaire struggles with a retired British officer and is fatally stabbed. The latter falls from the deck and is killed. Was the wound inflicted in self-defence? Theory of the quarrel."

I had no need to read what followed. I saw it all plainly enough beforehand, though I forced myself to go through the sensational account, word by word. The Cunard steamship *Russia* had sailed from New York for Liverpool *via* Halifax, having on board, among other passengers, Mr. Montgomerie Moir, a

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well-known financier, with his wife, valet, and maid. Mrs. Moir's father, Dr. Chabert, of Detroit, and another physician, Dr. Traver, of New York, were of the party. The first two days of the voyage were uneventful, although Mr. Moir was observed to be in a somewhat nervous and depressed condition, owing to news received from Cuba previous to sailing that his extensive sugar plantation on that island had been burned by incendiaries during insurrectionary troubles there. At Halifax a number of passengers were taken on board, among them a Captain Larpent, formerly of the Royal Engineers, now retired and on his way to join his children in England. Larpent was a quiet, gentlemanly-looking man, of pleasing address, and retiring, unobtrusive manner. Moir greeted him as an old friend whom he had not seen for many years, and at once introduced him to his wife and her father. It was noticed, however, that Larpent's manner towards Moir was stiff and reserved, and that he avoided shaking hands with him. Towards evening the sea grew rough and stormy, and there were few passengers on deck save Moir and Larpent, who were conversing in low tones, when suddenly they were seen to grapple with each other. For a moment it was supposed that they had lost their footing as the vessel shipped a heavy sea, and were merely clinging to each other for support, but it soon became evident that the struggle was in deadly earnest. Dr. Chabert tried to separate the two, but, being an elderly man, was powerless to do so, and before the first officer and two sailors had sprung to his assistance Moir had tripped up Larpent, throwing the unfortunate man against the low rail that guards the upper deck. Larpent fell completely over the rail and plunged backwards down to the lower deck, striking on his head. His neck was broken

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by the fall and death must have been instantaneous. Moir, in the meanwhile, was found to be bleeding profusely from a knife-wound in the throat which had completely severed the jugular vein. Everything that surgical skill could accomplish was done to relieve him, but he was unable to articulate and soon fainted away from loss of blood, and, after lingering through the night in an unconscious condition, expired in the early hours of the morning. Mrs. Moir was a witness of the whole tragedy—indeed, it was her screams that first called attention to the struggle. She would have thrown herself between the combatants, but was forcibly restrained by friends. The testimony is conflicting as to the commencement of the trouble. It will probably never be known who attacked the other first, and there is absolutely no clew to the cause of their quarrel. The most plausible theory is that Larpent struck in self-defence. It had been known for some time to Moir's friends that he was mentally unbalanced from business worries. It is said that he attacked and struggled with another friend about a week before sailing, without, however, any serious consequences. Dr. Chabert had prudently warned Larpent to beware of exciting Moir in his nervous condition, and it is probable that Larpent was prepared to defend himself in case of extremity, and did so with the above fatal results to both.

I laid down the paper, too stunned by the news for a while to take it all in clearly. Then, little by little, I could see the wheels of justice rolling relentlessly on to overtake her victim and crushing the innocent with the guilty. I could have told the cause of the quarrel, but it should never pass my lips, and I could only hope, for Larpent's sake, that it was indeed in self-defence that he had struck. I might reasonably

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hope it, for had he not written me so short a while before that he was at peace with all men? Perhaps this was the fulfilment of the Spectral Huntsman's warning, and it was over the Chabert's house and not ours that he had guided the phantom canoe! The time of the double death corresponded closely with the ghostly visitation. It was nine nights ago that the Phantom Huntsman had crossed over la Côte du Nord; the dates showed that it was eight days ago that the fatality had occurred. A week had passed before the *Russia* completed her stormy voyage, and in twenty-four hours the full account had reached us over this marvel of the century—the new Atlantic cable. For eight days, then, Étienne had been a widow! For eight days she had been free, and I knew it not! She had been free, and I, unknowing, was on my way this morning to become the husband of another woman!

With a start I became conscious of the direction my thoughts were taking. I sprang up, and, drawing myself to my full height and strength, I lifted my clasped hands to heaven and exclaimed fervently:

"Oneida! Oneida! I am happy, thrice happy, blessedly happy that I have won you, that you will be mine, my darling, my treasure, my heaven-sent wife!"

Then I sank back in my seat, and, covering my face with my hands, determinedly drove away all thoughts of what I had read. I forced myself to recall, one by one, all the tender memories of my courtship, my first meeting with Dido, her humble, pathetic declaration of love, the sweet hours of our first engagement, the gracious poise of her classic head, her strong, elastic figure and high-bred bearing, her exquisite beauty of feature and coloring, her dark-blue Irish eyes with their deep, shy, earnest gaze, and, above all, her enduring beauty of spirit, the

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goodness, the sweetness, the fidelity and truth that I could worship when the earthly beauty it illumined was faded or marred. A deep peace settled on my heart. I loved her tenderly, she loved me devotedly, she should never shed a tear through me if I could help it. I was very, very thankful I had not known until too late for any hesitation to be possible. Oh, Étienne! Étienne! passionately loved little friend of the past, God keep you and comfort you! I could never bring happiness to your generous spirit by breaking another woman's loving heart for your sake!

Towards evening we arrived at a little country town about twenty miles from Raleigh. On the rough platform of the wayside station stood the tall, gaunt figure of the major, and beside him the gracious form of Oneida, shyly, radiantly happy in expectation of greeting us. I think she saw a troubled look in my eyes, though she asked me no question, and as we were driving over rough, clay roads, through pine woods and fields of late wild-flowers to the old-time mansion which the major had purchased of a ruined planter, I thought best to tell her a part of the truth.

"I cannot get out of my thoughts something that I have seen in the papers. Some one has passed away, dear, who came for a while into both of our lives. Dido, you have not forgotten Captain Larpent?"

She started a little. "Is he dead?" she asked under her breath.

"Yes, dear. He was killed on his way to join his children, after all those years of separation. Did you know how much he admired you?"

She looked embarrassed and spoke hesitatingly:

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"I am afraid I did not like him very much. I ought not to say anything unkind as he is dead, but I thought he ought not, as a married man, to let me see that he, that he—" she turned scarlet and could not finish.

"That he was so much in love with you, poor fellow?" I asked, smiling.

"He never told me so," she said, hastily.

"Of course not. Moreover he did not dream that you suspected it, but women understand a man's manner instinctively."

"Not always," she corrected, with as near an approach to archness as I ever saw in her.

"Oh, it is very well for you to pretend that you did not dream I loved you, and yet who was hiding behind doors ready to overhear my declaration—I should like to know?" I asked, teasingly.

At the door of the mansion was Miss Sophy, beaming joyously on us all, gorgeous in a new brown silk gown, with pink bows at her throat and in her cap. Dido confidentially whispered to me that Aunt Sophy had been growing young and coquettish ever since the visit to the bachelor uncle had been planned, and we had a sly laugh together over the marvellous cap and kerchief.

Poor Larpent was already forgotten!

The major insisted that my grandfather should be under his roof, while I was comfortably installed in a cottage a stone's-throw from the gate of the avenue. Christmas was now close upon us, and our wedding was to be the morrow of the feast. The few intervening days of courtship were spent chiefly in riding through the picturesquely wooded country surrounding Major Haliburton's plantation, and viewing scenes of Southern life, as new to me as to Oneida. The whole country filled me with sadness. It was the

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first time in my life I had visited the South, the land of my American forefathers, and I was overflowing with sentimental regrets and commiseration, roused by the sight of the scars of war which four years of peace could not obliterate, the ruined homesteads and desolate plantations of the upper classes, the abject helplessness and shiftlessness of the emancipated negro, and the insolence and unscrupulousness of the "carpet-bag" demagogues, who insulted the one and intimidated the other. It did not need much of the major's eloquence to convince me of the magnitude of the task of reconstruction and the ominous failure of its commencement.

"I warn't no Copperhead, and I ain't one now," he said, "but if there could 'a' been any other way of doin' the 'reconstructin'' than the way we done, it's safe to say it would 'a' been better. Up North, Robert, a young man of twenty year and eleven months and twenty-nine days may have had the finest college education and the best home and civic training possible, but he can't vote, not till he's full twenty-one year. But they air givin' the ballot to poor, ignorant black children here who'll never be twenty-one if they live a hundred year—never—and they have taken it away from the educated whites. What is it all going to come to? If he don't need to have no qualification of property or learnin', the nigger won't have no ambition. Why should he work to improve himself? He don't need no shelter in this climate or no clothes worth mentioning, and he can get along with mighty little food, and if he can vote and feel himself a big man without havin' to hold property or pay a tax or learn how to read, then why in thunder should he ever bother himself with those things? To give a nigger a vote for nothin' is takin' away every motive for him to improve himself, while it is

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aggravatin' the better class o' whites who don't have no vote at all, and givin' the carpet-baggers every incentive to cheat and intimidate the niggers wholesale. It 'd be better for niggers and whites alike if they had to attain some standard o' citizenship besides age before they could exercise the franchise."

"I don't see what use the franchise is to anybody, anyhow," I said, despondently. "This talk about being a nation of freemen, governing with the consent of the governed, is all rot. Look at this letter I received this morning, Uncle Lee, and tell me what rights a free, intelligent citizen has in his own property, or how he is to defend his home and his privacy against a lot of ignorant, ambitious, thieving city politicians. Oh, it's enough to make a man a murderer or an anarchist!"

The major took the letter I held out to him, adjusted a pair of spectacles, and read it slowly amid sundry exclamations of "Sho! I declare to reason that's hard! Well, now, ain't there no way out of it? Cuss 'em all, anyhow, for a lot o' unprincipled blayguards! It's enough to rile a Quaker!"

"Go on!" I said, grimly. "It does me good to see some one else mad! Why am I any better off than a nigger? What's the use of having education and property and paying my taxes promptly, if I am to be coerced and cheated and driven out of my home?" and I choked and grew red, and shook my fist towards that portion of the landscape that lay to the Northwest.

"Sho, now! have you told your grandfather yet?"

"No, I cannot do it. I haven't even told Dido. It seems too cruel, and I'm all broken up over it. The dear place that we loved so much! To think of having all those beautiful shade trees at the foot of the lawn cut down and the public road to Grosse Pointe

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running within fifty feet of our front veranda, so that every one that passes by can see right into our windows! Oh, it is too cruel, too cruel! We might as well give up the place and move into the city and be done with it!"

"Can't all you property-owners along that air Grouse's Point road file a petition, or sign a protest, or threaten to sue the city for damages?"

"Damages! Why, Uncle Lee, those aldermen and councilmen all live on narrow city streets themselves, and they actually like publicity; they would like to have the horse-cars graze their front windows, and they cannot understand any other feeling. They think they are improving our property, and, instead of allowing us damages, they intend to raise our assessment and tax us for betterments! You see Mr. McNiff writes that the property owners in Hamtramck are thinking over every measure to prevent this road ruining their places, but they fear that it is useless to struggle against it."

The major grew very solemn. "Robert," he said, impressively, "there ain't no room for sentiment in a democracy, nor for what might seem like selfish exclusiveness. If a maysure seems to be for the greater good of the greater number, the smaller number must submit, or there could be no government at all. Now it comes hard on you—I ain't sayin' that it don't come mighty hard—and Dido, she got to take her share of yo'r disappointment, too, but if that road air for the greater good of the folks to Grouse's Point, and to the city folks that wants to get there, then it is yo'r duty of larger citizenship to submit. Robert," he continued, moving his arm over the scene around him, "these folks hereabouts had their sentiment, too. They war attached to their beautiful homes; they had their luxurious houses and hundreds of

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slaves, and I ain't sayin' that many didn't do their full duty by the poor critters, and make 'em happy, but it war for the greater good of the greater number that these things should be altered, and there's been a lot o' sufferin' and heart-break to do it. You see that little frame house on the village street, with the plaster tumblin' down about yo'r ears, and one or two shiftless old niggers workin' round it? Well, the man that lives there now and hasn't the ready money to keep it in repair, he owned my big plantation, with Corinthine colyums to the front porch and hundreds of niggers to do his bidding, barouches and hunters, family portraits, and solid silver plates. He war educated in Europe and entertained English lords; now his son is glad to sell calico behind the counter of the village store, and he himself don't count for as much as that old black man hoein' in his back yard. Conquest and emancipation war for the greater good of the greater number, but it meant desolation to many a heart and home. I ain't reproachin' you, Robert, for feelin' what it does you credit to feel, but in this Southern land o' war and ruin and misery it seems kinder out o' place for a Northerner to complain." And the major in his emotion helped himself to an extra large chunk of tobacco.

I could not but admit the justice of his reproof, and I tried to reason with myself and stifle the indignation that rose to choke me as I pictured the wanton destruction of our pretty lawn and stately shade trees, the glaring turnpike road obtruding upon our privacy, and the hideous red walls of the Nain Rouge frowning down on us in unobstructed ugliness. I had not the courage to tell my grandfather of the fresh curse fallen on our home, for I really dreaded the effect on his weakened vitality, but with Dido it was different. It is true that tears of disappointment

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came into her beautiful, shy, tender eyes, but the tears were for me, not for herself, and her great desire to console me, overcoming her natural timidity and reserve, made her bold to lavish on me such a wealth of affection and sympathy that I was comforted—ay, a thousand times comforted—and our first trial drew us even nearer if possible than months of happiness had been able to do.

I resolved, however, to leave no stone unturned to prevent, or, at least, delay until our return, the construction of the new road, and the next day, the eve of Christmas, I started for Raleigh with the major to despatch telegrams of remonstrance and petition. We were both well armed, for, though we apprehended no special danger, the country was none too quiet or orderly. Dido, who walked down as far as the avenue gate with us, trembled a little at the sight of the fire-arms.

"Do be careful," she pleaded. "I don't know why I am always so terrified at the sight of a pistol. I have tried to overcome the feeling, but I have a sort of superstitious dread that I shall meet my death from one, and I cannot see one without feeling faint and wanting to run away."

"Robert nor I ain't goin' to use a pistol while there is any other argument to try; but it's just this way—nobody 'll touch us if they know we air armed, but if we air not they won't have much respect for us. I been here nigh three year, and I ain't never used a pistol yet, but I ain't been without one, neither."

"Why does Uncle Lee always call you 'Robert'?" she asked me, with curiosity.

"Oh, that is a little joke of ours," I replied, laughing. "When I first told him my name was Rodéric he thought I said 'Robert Kidd,' and, as we had met

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enough to seek forgiveness of them, I would have forgiven. But I could not forget that I had been the one to first plant in Larpent's mind the suspicion of his friend's honor which probably led to their fatal quarrel.

As the puffing, ramshackle train rolled leisurely into Raleigh, all thoughts of the past were rudely disturbed by present actualities. The streets were filled by an angry, restless, threatening mob of low whites, pushing and fighting their way towards the court-house. The colored population seemed to be in hiding, while the mob was being held back by a mere handful of deputies and civilians volunteering for the defence.

"What can it be?—this is not election time," I exclaimed.

The major looked grave. "I gather from what I hear of the talk, Robert, that there has been one of those nameless crimes committed by an ignorant nigger brute that shock the whole community and rouse them as one man to deeds o' hideous revenge—that is, when a black man does it, though the black man has seen it done against his own race for generations unavenged. There's little doubt the cuss is guilty, but the law has him and is dealin' with him, and these people are attackin' the dignity and the authority of the law. Robert, you must keep out o' this; you have others dependent on you, but as for me, I come to this country a-purpose to see that black gets equal justice before the law with white, and my duty is beside them that air upholdin' the law."

I must say that my first impulse was one of sympathy with the mob, but a moment's reflection made me feel differently. These were critical days in the South, when the very existence of law and order was threatened, and justice was struggling for recogni-

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tion. Let the guilty man be hanged, but by a discriminating, dispassionate, lawful power, and not by a furious, blinded, irresponsible mob, ready for every excess of bloodthirstiness.

"Robert," said the major, turning round, "I told you to go home. This is no business o' yo'rs."

"I heard you, Uncle Lee," I said, recklessly. "You may talk until you are black in the face, but I don't go home till you do. There are times when humanity and our country need us more than our homes. Can I stand here, armed, and see justice and government defied, while I do nothing? Oh, go ahead! Don't waste time talking!"

The tumult increased as we neared the court-house, the shouts and oaths of the enraged multitude mingling in one indistinguishable roar as they fought and cursed, cursed and fought, with the ferocity of beasts. It made me shudder to think of the fate of the poor wretch whom these human lions were seeking to devour. They surged up against the steps and walls, they threw heavy stones against the doors and windows, they attacked the guards with clubs and brickbats, and through it all the horrible swelling shouts of uncontrolled passion, the angry roar of a tumultuous sea of vengeance-maddened brutes—what sound can be more awful?

So far no shots had been exchanged. The volunteer guard held the gates with bayonets, or beat back the crowd with the butt-end of their muskets, and the deputies wielded their clubs effectively, but the defenders were few in number, and it was evident that they could not hold out many hours without relief. It was impossible for us to force our way through the mob. Major Haliburton endeavored to create a diversion by haranguing those on the outskirts. He waved his long, lean arms, gesticulated vigor-

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ously, and vainly tried to make himself heard above the uproar. A few of the better class of citizens, hiding within their houses, recognized him from their windows. One of them, an ex-Confederate officer, came and stood by him.

"This is what comes of your carpet-bag government," he said, bitterly. "We Confederates have submitted to the Federal government; we know our duty and we would do it, but you have disfranchised us and given the ballot to ignorant black brutes and to lawless adventurers who have settled here to prey on us. Can you expect law or order, morality or justice, from such a state of affairs?"

"I ain't sayin' it's the best that could be done," replied Major Haliburton. "It warn't the idea of that big-hearted martyr, Abraham Lincoln. He'd 'a' given you yo'r rights, and put you on yo'r honor to use them loyally. But this government air all the government there is, and, as I'm a carpet-bagger myself, I'm bound to see that law and justice are upheld so far as one man's life can do it. Can you oblige me, colonel, by tellin' me whether it's known if word has been sent for the United States troops?"

"I do not know, Major Haliburton. The wires were cut and the telegraph office wrecked early in the day, but there are three troops of United States cavalry encamped nine miles out on the Raleigh and Gaston road. Whether they have been notified by messenger or not I am unable to say."

"We must make sure of that, Robert," said the major, turning to me. "I'm a friend of the commanding officer's; I know him, and he knows me. Take him this message. Send it by telegraph, if you can manage to tap the wires anywhere, or take

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it personally, if you can't do it quicker. That's yo'r duty. Mine lies yonder."

I saw his object, which was to gather a few of the cooler heads around him, attack the mob in the rear, and fight his way through to the court-house to the relief of the garrison. I gripped his long, lean hand and started off without a word. A light road-wagon was hitched near by, with a pair of restless, frightened young colts plunging and tugging at their halter. I cut the traces, and, loosing one of the animals, vaulted on his back. He took the bit in his teeth and ran as if possessed by the furies, but he was headed in the right direction, and I made no effort to control him. The faster he ran the better I was pleased, so long as I could keep my slippery seat. His frantic hoof-beats drowned all other sounds, and out on the rough, travel-worn road we flew, leaving the last of the outlying shanties far behind us. We had gone nearly four miles at this rate, when he began to slacken perceptibly his furious speed. We were passing through a low, swampy woodland district, and the road was rudely built up with logs, many of which had loosened and made dangerous ruts. I tried to guide the panting, trembling beast, but his hoof caught in one of these nasty crevices and I was thrown violently over his head. For a moment I was stunned, and as I recovered my senses it was with the consciousness that some creature in pain was near me. It was the poor colt, as I saw when I, at last, could raise myself on my elbow and look round. I struggled to my feet, and was glad to find that I could walk, that my worst injuries were a bruised shoulder and a giddy head, but the poor beast lay on his side with both fore-legs broken. There was nothing for it but to put him out of his misery, so I

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aimed my pistol, and, shutting my eyes, drew the trigger.

As the shot rang through the woods a man sprang out on to the road a few rods ahead of me.

"A horse!" I cried to him. "Get me a horse as quickly as possible; it is a matter of life and death for many. I will pay you well."

"I haven't a horse to give ye, stranger," he said. "My partner took the only one we got to ride into Raleigh a couple of hours ago. The wires are down between here and there, and he started in to find out what was the trouble."

"The wires!" I exclaimed. "Is there a telegraph station here?"

He raised his hand and pointed through the trees. There I could see a way-side shanty and a long line of blessed poles.

"And are the wires all right beyond here?" I asked.

"So far's I know," was the reply.

With a murmured thanksgiving I stumbled towards the shanty as fast as my dizzy, aching head would allow me. Thank God! the line was connected with the camp, and it was not many minutes before we were in communication, and my message delivered. I calculated that it would be full two hours before the troops would be mounted and have covered the nine miles of rough corduroy road to the capital. I was still half stunned and giddy, but I gathered my senses together as well as I could and started to walk back to Raleigh. In spite of my determined efforts, I was forced to stop and rest many times, and nearly an hour and a half had passed before I found myself in Union Square, the central point of the city, where four wide avenues meet at the foot of the State House steps. I turned down towards

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the court-house with hurried, anxious footsteps, guided by the hoarse, sullen roar of the infuriated mob. The little body of deputies and volunteer defenders were still holding their ground, and among them I could see the tall, lean form of Major Haliburton cheering them on, but it was easy to tell at a glance that the defence was weakening, while the attacking crowd was gathering in strength and ferocity with the hope of success. They were hurling bricks and flaming knots of pitch-pine into the windows, and every few moments they gathered themselves together for a determined rush; the leaders were beaten back, but those behind still pressed forward, and many were crushed and bleeding in the confusion that ensued. I pushed my way to the front with all the strength I could gather, and apparently the mob mistook my eagerness for that of a sympathizer, for they let me force my way through their closely serried ranks until I was within fifty feet of the beleaguered building, when, clinging about a lamp-post, I drew myself up above the heads of the crowd, and, waving my hat violently to and fro, I pointed down the Gaston road.

Major Haliburton saw me and understood, and a cheer went up from the weary, long-harassed guard. "The troopers are coming!" I shouted. "Hold out! hold out! they are almost here!"

With a yell of execration those about me sprang at me and pulled me down as if they would have torn me limb from limb.

"Curses on him!" they cried. "He is defending the criminal! He is bringing the soldiers to trample us down, when we are only seeking to give justice to a wretch!"

"Ay, curses on him!" shrieked a female voice. "May the crime we are seeking to punish desolate

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his own home! Ruin be to his sweetheart, his sister, his wife, and vengeance fall on him for the vengeance he has balked us of."

"Lynch him!" groaned the crowd. "If we can't have one, we'll have another. Swing him to the post."

A burly, evil-eyed creature approached me with a bludgeon. Held on every side as I was by a score of fierce, strong hands, I was powerless to defend myself, and the heavy weapon was fast descending on my head, when a well-directed shot from the courthouse steps struck my assailant, and, throwing out his arms, he staggered and fell back.

The shot stilled the crowd for an instant, there was a strange, momentary lull, and the hands that gripped me half loosened their hold; but it was only the lull before the bursting of the storm's fullest fury, and before the smoke had cleared away the mob, with one great demoniac yell of concentrated rage, dashed themselves once more in a solid mass against the little garrison, and a hail of shots rattled on roof and pavement. But in that moment's lull my straining ears had caught the sound they were waiting for, the tramp and clatter of hoofs on the Gaston road, and with one superhuman effort I wrenched myself loose from my captors, dashed wildly up a flight of steps near by, and, waving my arms frantically, I shouted like one possessed, "The cavalry! the cavalry! They are here! they are here! Long live our country and its laws! The cavalry is here! Three cheers for the boys in blue!"

With a shout that rent the sky the wearied garrison once more repelled the onslaught. Again there was a lull in the tempest, as all ears were bent to listen to the sound, ever clearer, ever nearer, of ringing hoof-

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and jangling sword, and then the troopers rode sweeping through the square and down the broad avenues, sabres and helmets flashing in the sunlight, and the mob scattering before them as chaff before the breeze.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE reaction from intense anxiety and long-continued strain was almost too much for me. I threw myself back on the steps, laughing, shouting, and cheering, and was still laughing and cheering wildly when Uncle Lee threw his strong arms round me and said to the bystanders:

"The majesty of the law have been upheld. Now let justice be done!"

Gaunt, powder-begrimed, and ragged, the major's person gave evidence of the two hours' struggle he had been through. All seemed to look to him for advice and direction. His rugged honesty and common-sense and high purpose prevailed in the counsels of the authorities. The troopers were posted about the city, a proclamation was issued that the prisoner would be tried without delay, and if found guilty would be visited with the extremest penalty of the law, and in the meanwhile the poor wretch was conveyed under heavy guard from the courthouse to the county prison, amid the groans and curses of the bystanders. Had I cared to look in the brutish face I could not have done so, for he hung it low and shrank trembling and terror-stricken before the malignant eyes turned on him. The words of the last verse of Robert Kidd's song that I had been singing in the morning rang in my ears as I looked on:

"To the execution dock
I must go!

To the execution dock,

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Where all the people flock—
I alone to bear the shock,
I must go!"

We seemed to have lived through many days since I had parted from Dido in the freshness of the early morning, yet it was only now high noon. We lingered in the city till late in the afternoon, for the major felt bound to see that every arrangement was made to guard against a possible night attack, and I had to look up and settle with the owner of the dead colt. The populace were outwardly quiet, but sullen and discontented, and everywhere dark looks followed us, for they recognized the major as one of the leaders of the defence and me as the messenger of succor to the garrison, and we could hear murmurs of execration as we passed. In the early part of the afternoon our footsteps had been persistently dogged by two men, evil-eyed, low-browed, and with them the woman who had so freely cursed me and mine. They seemed, however, to abandon whatever sinister design they may have had against us, for as the day waned we saw them no more, and it was with a sigh of relief that we boarded the evening train and left the scene of our morning's conflict far behind us.

"Glad Dido didn't know this morning how much I was to use that air pistol," remarked the major, stretching his legs comfortably over the seat in front of us, and cutting himself some tobacco. "Of all the bullets I took with me I ain't got but one left."

"But if it hadn't been for your pistol I should not be going back to her now," I said. "She will love it better since it kept me from swinging to a lamp-post."

"I never yet missed what I aimed for," observed the major; "but I tell you what, Robert, you would

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never have swung from no lamp-post! If I hadn't 'a' had bullets enough to pick off every fellar that laid a hand on you, I'd 'a' put my last bullet through yo'r heart rather than see you tortured. And I'd ask you to do the same to me or any o' mine."

"I couldn't, Uncle Lee," I said, gravely. "My Church won't let me take life in that way, not even to save my dearest from torture or dishonor. You see the Church has always sanctified suffering, she teaches that there is no dishonor where there is no sin, and her martyrs are her greatest glory. I should much prefer to be excused from torture if I could get the lowest place in heaven in any other way, but, at the worst, it is only a few hours against all eternity."

"I ain't given to controversy, but there air some dogmas I couldn't swaller," declared the major, with emphasis, "and I'm mighty glad I'm not called upon to do so."

I think he saw how tired and worked up I was, for he put his arm round my shoulders and said, compassionately, "I guess you don't want to see nor talk about no more shootin' or murders. It's been kinder rough on yo'r nerves all yo'r life from yo'r infancy up, and we can find pleasanter things to think about and talk about."

And he began to speak of Dido, of our approaching wedding, of the future before us, of a happy home with many blessings of youth, health, of perfect trust in each other, of tender, wholesome affection, of contentment in moderate circumstances, and this sweet vision soon shut out the horror of the preceding hours.

"Robert," said the major, hesitatingly, after a pause, breaking in on my happy dreams—"Robert, I don't wish to be impertinent nor premature, but if it ever come that you war castin' about for a name, and

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it war a male, it would be a glory and a happiness to me to see perpetuated, as it war, the illustrious name of John C. Frémont, the hero of Emancipation and the immortal Pathfinder, the exponent of Republican principles and the creator of the Far West!"

"I won't forget your wish, Uncle Lee," I said, laughing and blushing happily, as I pulled my hat down over my eyes to conceal my embarrassment.

"Not but what I know that yo'r grandfather have the first right to a suggestion," added the major, with great consideration.

Now I knew my grandfather to be a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat, and that if there were two things firmly fixed in his mind they were, first, that the War of Independence had been fought and won by the French and the Civil War by the Irish; secondly, that the whole West, Northwest, Southwest, and Far West had been discovered and opened up to civilization by French explorers and settlers, followed by Irish immigration and colonization. True, General Frémont was of French descent, as my grandfather frequently pointed out to the major, and it was therefore permissible to recognize his exploits, but would it not be a sacrilege in the old Chevalier's eyes to have his name supersede the historic Rodéric of the De Macartys? There was but one name worthy of such honor, and had not my grandfather always said that if he had had the naming of me in my infancy I should have been christened in honor of France's legitimate king, Henri Dieudonné d'Artois?

But now our short railway ride was finished, and I was rested and happy, free from morbid presentiments, rejoicing in the sweet coolness of the evening air, and ready for a brisk walk towards home and Dido!

"Say! I'd get home quick if I was you," said the

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station-master, mysteriously, coming up to us. "Maybe it's none o' my business, but there was four low-lookin' cusses came up on the freight-train from Raleigh about half an hour ahead of you. They have been drinking, and I didn't like their looks, so when they asked me what time the evening train would be in and which way Major Haliburton lived, I told 'em your train was already in, and I started 'em on the road away from your house, 'stead of towards it. But they may have been set on the right track by some one else, and I been kinder uneasy till you came."

We did not wait to hear him out. We started on a dead run down the road, both of us trembling and white to the lips, for the same thought possessed us both.

"Shall we take a short cut through the woods?" asked the major, hoarsely.

"Better the road. She may be at the gate to meet us."

"If she'll only stay to the house!" groaned the major. "There's yo'r grandfather, and three strong niggers, and all the dogs. But it's so light yet she may take it into her head to meet us."

In the long spring twilight it was still almost as bright as at noon. It was only too probable that she would be tempted out.

"Oh, my beauty! my girl! why did I ever send for you to this God-forsaken country?" he moaned, as he ran; then, a moment later, "And I ain't got but one bullet left!"

I handed him some of mine, but they proved to be too large, for our pistols were of different make and calibre. "Change pistols with me," he begged. "I got more nerve than you."

"See that bay-tree blossom?" I asked. Firing as

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I ran, my bullet cut the blossom's stem, and it fell into the road.

"You'll do!" said the major.

But in answer to my shot came a sound that set me wild with terror—the deep-mouthed baying of a hound! I struggled on frantically, and ever louder and clearer grew the melancholy wail. I was dripping with perspiration from my rapid run, but cold chills came over me for dread of the fatal significance of that sound, and the teeth chattered in my head.

At the turning of the road we saw her, though we were yet half a mile away. And we saw something else that made us grip our pistols still tighter—dark, ugly forms crouching in the bushes behind her and creeping stealthily up to her. She stood there, unaware of her danger, gazing up the road towards us, erect in her magnificent beauty and elastic strength. The noble hound crouching at her feet was on the alert, however. We could see him raise his head with a prolonged howl, and step round uneasily. God bless the poor brute! We knew he would defend her as nobly as hound could do it. If only the ruffians were not armed he might protect her till we reached the spot.

But a shot rang into the air, the hound leaped up, then fell at his length. She turned in affright and the ruffians surrounded her. With a yell I raised my pistol to shoot the first who should lay a hand on her. One moved, I tried to pull the trigger, but ere I could do so something cold as ice seemed to touch my arm, the pistol fell from my nerveless grasp with a crash on to a stone at my feet and exploded.

"My God! and I have but one bullet!" cried a voice that in its horror I hardly recognized as the major's.

I could not move. The blood was flowing from

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cannot accept it as my flag. I can give up the crown of France, but I cannot give up my principles."

And so the dream and hope of the Legitimists was destroyed, and when the feeble old man, whose pillow I was watching, raised his glass and drank for the first and last time to "Henri V., gloriously reigning over the French monarchy," I could only turn my head away to hide the tears, and hope that he might never have to learn the truth.

And he never knew. His memory was soon lost to the things of the present, and he was speaking of his wife, of Félice de Belancour, for he thought she was in Étienne's room, and that our infant was his little Félice, my mother. The priest who was ministering to him the consolations of the Church in his last hours was to him the friend of his youth, the patriot Père Richard. And so his end was painless and happy in the fancied presence of his dearly beloved. Nay, who knows but they whom he was so soon to meet in the better world were actually with him there, and that in his apparent wanderings he was really seeing with clearer eyes than ours?

Ah, me! The days of which I have written at such length were the days of youth and strength. My hair and mustache are snow-white now, and I walk with a slow, deliberate tread which my flatterers are pleased to call "stately." And Étienne is "Madame" Frémont, to distinguish her from my eldest son's wife, though in my eyes she has scarcely aged. It is true that her curly hair is now a soft gray, and that her figure is somewhat more matronly and dignified, but she has preserved the brilliancy of eyes and complexion, her features have retained the delicacy and spirit of outline that always distinguished them, her dress is still dainty and tasteful, and she is ever the same Étienne, trusty, loyal, lovable,

CHAPTER XXX

MORE than thirty years have passed since that evening in North Carolina, and I cannot yet write of it with calmness. A merciful unconsciousness kept me in its bondage for many a day, and when I awoke, at last, to the full perception of my surroundings I was puzzled. For I saw Miss Sophy bustling about my sick-room with tender importance, and at her throat and on her cap the wonderful pink bows that Dido and I had slyly joked about. I heard my grandfather calling, cheerily, "Has the lad waked up yet?"

Could it be possible that it was all a horrible vision of disturbed sleep? Where was Uncle Lee? And would the gracious figure of Oneida soon come in to rouse me by dropping an armful of dewy Banksia roses on my face? But when I tried to move, there were my bandaged leg and arm, my aching head and strained shoulder to witness to the reality of my dream. Yet, if it had been as I feared, what did the pink bows signify, and Pépé's cheery voice? I dared not ask a question. I lay there and let them nurse me tenderly, while I waited, waited in vain for some message, some token that would soothe the awful disquiet at my heart.

But the hours slipped by and no message came to me. I would raise my eyes every time the door opened, only to close them again in disappointment and dread. An entire day of consciousness had

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passed before I could frame my lips to the question that trembled upon them.

"Pépé, I must speak. Do not try to stop me. What does it all mean? Why are you and Miss Sophy the only ones to come to me? Why is there no message? I must know. I cannot bear this silence. The suspense is killing me!"

My grandfather moaned. "Listen, Éric," he said, and his face was old—oh, so old!—and his voice was choked and uncertain. "We let her go to meet you, unsuspecting of danger. Then I heard a shot and the baying of a hound. I seized a rifle and ran as fast as these aged limbs could carry me, followed by two of the negroes. I could see her standing at the gate, but I could not see you or them for the turning in the road. There were more shots; then the ruffians noticed us coming, and fled. We found you three lying not far from each other. She was so beautiful, Éric! so radiant with youth and joy! There could have been no suffering, physical or mental. The bullet had done its work mercifully, and she had not had time to realize the extent of her danger, but was still wearing a smile of welcome for you!"

Here the old man broke down and sobbed pitifully for a moment. Then he raised his head suddenly and looked at me. "The bullet was not theirs. It was from his pistol!"

"I know, Pépé; I remember. But that must be our secret," I groaned. "And what of him? Could he survive it?"

"We lifted him up, but he never moved or spoke again. We found no slightest trace of wound or hurt upon him. The surgeon said death must have been instantaneous. His heart broke with the shot that pierced hers!"

I could not hear more just then. It was not for

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many days that I learned how ill I had been, how the surgeon had feared for my reason if I woke too suddenly to the full consciousness of the tragedy, and how, for my sake, these two devoted souls had put away sorrow and mourning, my grandfather training his voice to cheerfulness and his face to smiles, and Miss Sophy laying her darling in the grave, and then coming back to array herself in her smartest finery and sit by my bedside to await the dawn of returning consciousness.

I wish I might have seen my beautiful Dido's face once more before they left her in her grave under the live-oaks, with the wild jessamine and Banksia roses blooming over it. The uncle who so worshipped her, who would have given his life a thousand times for hers, and yet had been doomed to die in taking her life, lay by her side. Oh, if he had only known one little moment sooner that rescue was so near! Oh, the pity of it! the pity of it!

How distant, how unreal all else seemed in life beside these two graves! I could hardly understand how my grandfather could have any power left to grieve over the news that reached us from Detroit that the old homestead at Hamtramck had been burned to the ground. To me the news came almost as a relief, for I felt I could not have endured the torture of looking at all our loving preparations for the bride's home-coming. Every little carefully planned comfort, every suggestion of the feminine presence expected there would have been a fresh arrow of grief to my heart; and the tower-room, that dainty bridal-boudoir, would have been like the tomb itself to my stricken soul. I was glad, then, that it was burned—burned the very evening of the tragedy—as a sort of funeral pyre of all that was precious in the past! But to my grandfather the loss of his home, with all its

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of our own moderate circumstances, shared the bench on which I was resting, and entered into conversation with us.

"There goes a lucky man," he said, indicating the occupant of a luxurious barouche. I looked up and recognized the bland, urbane countenance of my former trustee, Mr. James Arthur. I also saw that he, too, recognized us, but he turned his face away without as much as a nod and looked straight before him, too comfortably prosperous to allow himself to be disturbed by the sight of less fortunate pedestrians beside the road, and lolled back on the cushions with the air of one who felt himself wholly deserving of the abundance with which the Lord had prospered him.

"He was shrewd enough," continued my informant, as we watched the barouche bowl easily along till out of sight, "to foresee the coming of the iron and copper industry on Lake Superior, and prudent enough to invest heavily in mining property and in the construction of freight barges for the ore-carrying trade. He persuaded others to invest with him and establish fine plants, then he ran the concerns into debt, threatened insolvency, and froze out the other shareholders until he controlled the stock. He bided his time, then seized a lucky turn of affairs, worked the mines at a tremendous profit, which all went into his own and his nephew's pocket. Now his nephew has died, and he is in sole control, with many additional millions to his credit."

"But did not the nephew leave a widow?" I asked, hesitatingly.

"Yes, but he made a peculiar will. The widow was to have a third of the property and to choose which of three portions indicated it should be, the rest going to his uncle. The widow, for some inscrutable reason, chose to take as her share a Cuban sugar

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plantation which he had made millions out of in its day, but which was now ruined. Her lawyers made it clear to her that it no longer represented a third of his property, nor as much as a thirtieth probably, but she stuck to her bargain with unaccountable persistence, the stranger that she has no fortune of her own and her family are not what you would call wealthy. There must have been some sentimental attachment to the place to influence her. So all Moir's shares in his uncle's enterprises have thus reverted to Arthur, lucky dog that he is!"

I rose soon after and wheeled my grandfather home. There, pale and tired, I threw myself on a couch and gave way to all my pent-up bitterness.

"That carriage was mine!" I declared. "Those horses were mine, the coachman and footman in green and gold livery were mine, mine, mine! I paid for them all! I should be riding in them now with you at my side, Pépé! You should loll in your barouche in Central Park every day. How can he dare to enjoy himself in his stolen property? Does his conscience never give him uneasy moments?"

But my grandfather shook his head sadly. "Do not think of me, Éric. I am too near the end to care. You are young, and feel injustice as keenly as I should were I your age, but why should even you desire wealth? It could not bring us back what we have lost, and we have been happy until now in our moderation, because what we had we held or earned honestly. Let us still be content, even if we are reduced to bear some privations. It is all so little, so little when we are waiting to join our dear ones in eternity!"

We parted from Miss Sophy with many demonstrations of regard and gratitude. She flung her arms round my neck and kissed me good-bye "for

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